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ABSTRACT

A handbook for teachers in small school districts who are faced with the need to include increasing numbers of students with limited English proficiency (LEP) in their regular classroom programs is presented. The handbook is designed to help teachers develop effective strategies to adapt curricula and instructional materials to meet this population's needs. The handbook begins with a discussion of common concerns of teachers, the rewards of teaching LEP students, and survival skills for the first few days of class. Subsequent chapters examine: the characteristics, testing, and language-learning situation of LEP students; issues concerning the LEP student in the regular classroom (orientation, the classroom environment, classroom management, grouping, communication, and cross-cultural understanding); and adapting instruction and materials for LEP students (strategies for adapting instruction, identifying goals and objectives, identifying new concepts and vocabulary, selecting commercial materials and/or preparing simplified reading material, generating reinforcement activities, and selecting methods for teaching reading skills). (MSE)

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A Classroom Teacher's Handbook For Building English Proficiency

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Preface

The Bilingual Education Instructional and Training Materials Project was funded in August, 1982, by the Office of Bilingual and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA) in the U.S. Department of Education. Over a period of two-and-a-half-years, the project demonstrated how a school district can respond effectively to the challenge of a new student population—specifically, students with limited English proficiency.

The project represented a collaborative effort between Creative Associates, Inc., a minority-owned firm specializing in the development of human resources, and Arlington Public Schools in Virginia, a small suburban school district facing a large increase in its limited English proficient (LEP) student population. A Technical Team that included teachers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and curriculum specialists in the Arlington Schools, Creative Associates' staff, and representatives from the Alexandria Schools, George Mason University, and the Georgetown Bilingual Education Service Center worked together to

- describe, pilot test, and validate a process approach to the development of curriculum and instructional materials;
- produce training materials that will be used by trainers in helping teachers develop curriculum and instructional materials using a process approach; and
- prepare a set of instructional materials suitable for use with LEP students.

The project began with a state-of-the art review of the literature. Drawn from that research were these conclusions:

- Classroom teachers and all personnel involved in the education of LEP students need materials which are suitable and adaptable to teaching limited English speaking students.
- Because the language minority population changes often, educators must constantly adapt both locally developed and commercial materials.
- Teacher involvement, administrative support, and teacher training are major factors contributing to the success of local instructional materials design.
- Locally developed curriculum and instructional materials rarely are shared widely with other potential users.

National needs, the priorities of the OBEMLA, and the findings of the literature study provided an impetus for the development of several products designed to assist other school districts, particularly rural and small suburban districts, that are experiencing a sudden influx of LEP students. Each product reflects the research findings and the experience-based beliefs of Arlington Public Schools personnel that instructional innovations cannot be accomplished in a vacuum. Educational change, to be successful, must be placed in the total context of program planning and implementation to assure the creation of a permanent system

to respond to the needs of new student populations or new educational priorities and concerns.

The products which resulted from this project are described below.

A Literature Review

This document presents a review of curriculum materials in the resource centers of the ten school districts in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. It also reviews teacher training materials from the Bilingual Education Service Center at Georgetown University and the Bilingual Center at the University of Maryland. It includes documented information and an assessment of the needs and practices of widespread materials development at the local level. The document provides verification of the process approach implemented in the Arlington Public Schools.

A Process for Meeting the Instructional Needs of Special Student Populations

Addressed to educators in school districts faced with the need to respond to student populations not previously served, this document provides a description of how Arlington Public Schools responded to the need for change. It outlines the five stages in the change process and illustrates these descriptions with events as they took place in Arlington.

Instructional Materials

Beginning Social Studies for Secondary Students: Building English Proficiency

This set of instructional materials, designed for students with very limited English proficiency, includes a **Reader**, a **Student Workbook**, and a **Teacher's Manual**. The **Reader** is a collection of illustrated reading selections that reinforce reading skills through social studies content. The **Student Workbook** includes pre- and post-reading activities to help reinforce reading and study skills using concepts introduced in the **Reader**. The **Teacher's Manual** provides general teaching strategies that take the teacher step-by-step through the presentation of lessons. Instructions include reduced workbook pages containing the answers to the exercises followed by objectives for each lesson, and appropriate teaching strategies. The **Teacher's Manual** also contains pre- and post-tests for each unit with answer keys and scoring instructions.

Training Materials

A Classroom Teacher's Handbook for Building English Proficiency

This practical handbook is addressed to teachers who work in small school districts and who must accommodate students with limited English proficiency in their regular classroom programs. Its purpose is to help teachers develop effective strategies and to adapt the curriculum and instructional materials to meet the needs of this special student population.

A Trainer's Guide to Building English Proficiency

Part One of this book, addressed to school administrators, examines the decisions and tasks required at each stage in the process of change. Part Two, addressed to those who provide support to teachers, provides strategies to assist teachers in adapting instruction and materials for LEP students. Part Two must be used in conjunction with the **Handbook**.

A Resource Book for Building English Proficiency

Designed as a supplement to the **Handbook** and **Trainer's Guide**, this book includes articles, annotated references, and resources for those who wish to explore topics more extensively. It offers both theoretical discussions and practical advice on who to call and where to look for assistance. It provides the research and a theoretical basis for information in the **Handbook** and the **Trainer's Guide**.

The chart below illustrates the relationship between the three components of the training materials.

Building English Proficiency Training Materials

Topics	Handbook	Trainer's Guide	Resource Book
Decision Making for Building English Proficiency	—	1-34	3-37
Approaches to Training	—	39-50	3-11
Learning About the LEP Student: Cultural Issues	10-14; 36-37	53-56	39-47
Learning About the LEP Student: First & Second Language Acquisition	22-28	57-59	65-75
Assessing the LEP Student	15-22	61-64	27-37; 49-61
Identifying Goals and Objectives	42-43	65-68	13-23; 63-64
Selecting Teaching Strategies and Classroom Management Techniques	5-8; 29-36; 40-42; 49-50	69-72	77-86
Teaching Reading Skills	46-49	71-72	84, 85, 86
Selecting/Adapting/Developing Instructional Materials	44-46	73-76	91-111

A Classroom Teacher's Handbook for Building English Proficiency

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Introduction

A Classroom Teacher's Handbook for Building English Proficiency is addressed to teachers who work in small school districts and who must include students with limited English proficiency (LEP) in their regular classroom programs. Its purpose is to help teachers develop effective strategies and to adapt curricula and instructional materials to meet the needs of this special student population.

If you have never worked with LEP students or if you have some experience teaching LEP students and wish to expand your knowledge and skills, you will find the **Handbook** informative and full of ideas and suggestions. The format of the book encourages you to record your ideas and experiences, thereby making the document both a personal journal and a reference.

The chapters which follow lead you through a process of developing the skills and knowledge required to meet the needs of LEP students. The process begins where you are likely to start—addressing your concerns about the effects of this new student population on the classroom program. Thus, the **Handbook** offers survival strategies for the first few days and a frank discussion of what changes will be required.

The remainder of the **Handbook** describes LEP students and discusses how they can be integrated into the classroom and how you can adapt instruction and materials to meet their needs. Because the **Handbook** builds on what you already know about different learning styles, lesson planning, and effective use of instructional materials, discussion of each issue begins with a self-assessment. The self-assessments establish your individual knowledge base. All teachers have their own set of beliefs, their own approach to teaching students, and the knowledge and skills they have developed over the years. The **Handbook** will help you build on the foundation you have established to help you develop effective approaches to meeting the needs of LEP students.

I. A Place to Start

Most teachers facing a new challenge have real concerns about what changes they will have to make and how their style and approach to teaching will be affected. If you have been asked to integrate into your classroom students who do not speak English, you probably have concerns which are not unlike those of other teachers who have faced the same challenge. It's important to realize that you are not starting from scratch. If you have been teaching for several years, you already know a lot about how students learn and how to adapt the curriculum to meet instructional needs and learning styles.

Common Concerns of Teachers

The list below highlights some common concerns of teachers when they are first confronted with students who do not speak English.

- How will I communicate with students who do not speak English when I don't speak their language?
- I don't know the first thing about teaching English as a second language.
- How can I meet the needs of LEP students without causing a negative impact on my other students?
- How much will I have to change my teaching techniques?
- What teaching techniques are recommended for LEP students?
- Will I need to change the curriculum and instructional materials I use?
- What materials can I use with LEP students and how should I use them?
- In which group(s) will I place these students?
- How can I teach reading to a student who does not know the language? (an elementary teacher)
- I only have the students for one period a day. How can I teach my subject (math, science, social studies) if I have to be concerned about developing English proficiency in a few students? (a high school teacher)
- How will the LEP students understand my classroom rules and expectations?
- How will LEP students be able to follow directions given in English?
- Should I expect LEP students to achieve the same goals and objectives I set for the other students?
- What specific goals and objectives can I set for LEP students?
- How can I assess what they already know?
- How can I assess progress?

- How can I grade students?
- What criteria should I use for promotion?
- Who is responsible for students' program/ progress when neither teachers nor guidance counselors can communicate with them?
- Where can I find an interpreter?

If your concerns are similar to those listed above, you can feel comfortable knowing that you are not alone. These concerns and others are addressed in the pages which follow. If you have other concerns, you may want to list them below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

The Rewards of Teaching LEP Students

Teachers who have worked with LEP students say that there are many benefits to integrating this special student population into the classroom.

- Teaching LEP students can be very rewarding. Because of the number of skills these students need to learn, their progress is astounding and encouraging to watch.
- American students benefit from the opportunity to help others, and in the process, they enhance their own learning.
- LEP students often bring fresh ideas to the classroom. Their input provides an opportunity to incorporate cross-cultural understanding into the curriculum. You and your students can develop a greater appreciation of your own cultures and a sensitivity to differences.
- LEP students may be the most highly motivated in your class. They often take homework very seriously and are eager to do extra work copying and memorizing.
- Most LEP parents back the teacher 100% and support all efforts to teach and discipline their children.
- Many LEP students have a high regard for teachers. Their respect and appreciation are refreshing and encouraging.

Facing Reality

Let's take a realistic look at what teaching the LEP student in your classroom will involve and how it will affect your teaching methodology.

- Remember first that *LEP students are children*, and they will respond as other children do. Your non-verbal communication—a smile, tone of voice—will convey interest, warmth, and caring. Holding them to high expectations conveys your respect for their abilities. Secondary students will especially respond to tangible rewards such as success in school and an opportunity to participate in activities.
- *English is a language you know well.* Many of you taught your own children to speak the language, and you will find that there are definite similarities between first and second language acquisition. You will build on what you already know, and you will learn some strategies for teaching English as a second language. You will also become more conscious of how you speak.
- Many *teachers adapt and modify* their curriculum and instructional materials to conform to their own style of teaching and to better suit the learning needs of their students. They often use textbook lessons in creative and innovative ways. If you are such a teacher, you will feel comfortable with adapting materials and lessons for one more group with special needs.

- You have probably established your own *ground rules* and expectations for behavior in your classroom. It may help to write them clearly for all students. Most LEP students are accustomed to strict control maintained by the teacher. Be sure all students understand your rules and methods of discipline.
- You may already be aware of your own *cultural identity* and recognize the importance of developing sensitivity to cultural differences in all students. If so, the LEP students in your classroom enable you to extend your knowledge, possibly to new ethnic groups. If you are accustomed to teaching students from only one culture, you may find it helpful to learn more about your own cultural attitudes and biases as you learn about the new students in your classroom. You will have many opportunities to learn firsthand how culture influences behavior and attitudes.
- If you are an *elementary school teacher*, you have the advantage of spending more time with all your students.

  You are more likely to consider all aspects of the child's development: emotional, social, and cognitive.

  You already know how to teach reading and language arts, and you can apply this knowledge to teaching the LEP student. For example, you can expand your preteaching of vocabulary and new concepts and provide more written and oral follow-up.

  You have the advantage of working with young LEP students when the student-teacher relationship is often close and there is more time allowed for developing language skills.
- If you are a *high school teacher*, you may have your LEP students for only one period a day—perhaps for less than an hour. While you cannot be expected to bring each LEP student up to grade level in one year, there is much you *can* do.

  You can make effective use of peer tutoring. Students can be a great support for LEP peers and for you.

  You can call upon guidance counselors and other support personnel to help coordinate other services LEP students may need. They can circumvent possible language problems by involving institutions and individuals in the community.

  You can identify content objectives that do not require a high level of language skills: e.g., map skills, computation skills. In that way, you can start teaching content immediately.

It is important to keep in mind that *all* your students need to acquire good basic language and study skills. The suggestions in this book for modifying lessons and materials for LEP students may require some changes in your approach to teaching your subjects, but these strategies will enhance learning for *all* students.

For further information refer to the appropriate sections in the **Resource Book**.

- Culture and the Classroom Teacher (pages 39-47).
- Learning a Second Language (pages 65-75).
- Teaching Strategies for Working With LEP Students (pages 77-86).

Surviving the First Few Days—A Starter Kit

You will probably be facing your LEP students before you have had time to read this **Handbook**. Therefore, we have put together a variety of activities to help you and your students weather those hectic first days and weeks, until you have had time to develop a more comprehensive plan for instructing this special needs group in your classroom. Some of the activities below can be used at any time during the year. Some are especially helpful when you want to involve new students.

If you have a volunteer or an assistant teacher, or if you can assign a buddy to the student, they can do some of the activities. It is extremely important, however, to set up a time during the day when you work with LEP students on a one-to-one or small group basis. This can be done while the other students work on their own.

Activities for Elementary School Students

- Take the LEP students on a tour of the school. If you cannot do this, ask the cooperation of a secretary, assistant teacher, media specialist, or another school staff person. This tour can also be conducted with the help of a foreign student who already knows how to speak English. While on the tour you can:

  Identify by name each place you show them.

  Place a label on the door or wall next to that place.

  Show pictures that depict what activities occur at each place.

  Give older students a labeled map of the school and help them locate each place on the map.

  Introduce the people who work at each one of the places you visit: e.g., the secretary, the media specialist, etc.

- Teach students basic survival expressions.

  How to ask permission to go to the bathroom.

  How to buy lunch; what are the names of the foods on the daily menu.

  How to express greetings.

  What to do when the fire alarm sounds.

- Teach the names of common places and objects.

  Take students around the classroom, the cafeteria, the gym, the bathroom, and introduce the name of common places and objects.

  If at all possible, label objects, furniture, and places in the classroom.

  Give students flash cards with the names of objects and places and ask them to show you the objects or match them with pictures.

- Ask students to write their name, address, and telephone number. If they can't write this information, first write it for them, then have them copy it for you.

  If students have difficulty in copying or forming the letters, have them trace sandpaper letters or use a handwriting workbook. These activities are especially helpful with illiterate students or with students whose language uses a non-western alphabet.

- Give students cut-out letters of the alphabet and ask them to put the letters in order. Then have students write the alphabet.

- Give students magazines and ask them to cut out the letters of the alphabet and make their own set of alphabet cards.

- Using magazines or old textbooks, have students cut out pictures about a specific topic such as transportation, clothing, fruit, or colors. Then have students prepare a scrapbook. Help students label the pictures and pronounce the names of the objects in the pictures. You might have to identify a picture in each category so that they know what to look for. Next, have students make flash cards with the names of the objects. After students review the words, they can store the flash cards in a vocabulary bank (a folder or a cardboard box). Later, students can review the flash cards with the teacher or a buddy.

- Use as many pictures as possible to represent what you are talking about: e.g., if you are teaching the circulatory system, provide pictures students can label with the help of a buddy, volunteer, etc.

- Place students in an intermediate reading group and let them listen to you and the other students.

  Point to the illustrations when they relate to what is being said or discussed.

  Allow for a silent period.

  Do not force students to answer complete questions about what is being read or discussed.

- Use simple exercises about colors, shapes, or other basic concepts.

  Help students make color or shape charts with labels or flash cards with the color or shape on one side and the label on the other.

  Have students match labels with colors or shapes on a chart, then have them repeat the activity on a ditto.

  Have students copy the words five times on a piece of paper and memorize them.

- Look for every opportunity to include LEP students in classroom activities: e.g., singing, games, classroom chores, reading groups, hands on experiences, etc. Seat them close to you so that they can see what you are doing.

- If you have a Language Master, have students listen to cards, then repeat and write the words or phrases. There are good ESL commercial cards available. (See **Resource Book** page 104.)

- Give students simple crossword or word-find puzzles with the words they have learned the first few days: school-related vocabulary, clothing, food, colors, shapes, days of the week, or the vocabulary of the lesson you have taught.

- Have students listen to stories on tape while they follow in the book. Filmstrip/tape stories can also be used.

- Provide a simple chart showing the numerals 1-10, with the corresponding number words. Have students make individual sets of flash cards with the numeral on one side and the word on the other side.

- Give students connect-the-dot activities; have them name, label, and color the picture.

- Give students fill-in number charts. Start from simple charts and work to more complex.

- Make a point to display LEP students' work regularly on the hall or classroom bulletin boards.

Activities for Secondary School Students

- Assign buddies to orient LEP students to the school and to help them in class. A buddy can:

  give a tour of the school;

  take students to the cafeteria, health room, office;

  introduce students to the counselor, the physical education teacher, etc.;

  orient students to important rules such as not cutting in line, not leaving the school building, getting to class on time, etc.;

  help students open the book to the correct page and direct them to the correct activity;

  help students review vocabulary by making and using flash cards.

- Give students a map of the school and help them locate important places.

- Give students a map of the school with labels and have them copy the labels onto a blank map.

- If students are pre-literate or do not know the western alphabet, refer to items 4, 5, 6 of the elementary school activities.

- Provide simple graphs, maps, and word games or puzzles to help students reinforce what they have learned.

- Have all students locate the country they or their families come from on a map or globe. Have the students locate the capitals of those countries.

- Arrange for people who speak the LEP students' language and are knowledgeable about the students' countries to tell students about those countries and cultures. This activity will sensitize all students in the class to the cultures of their classmates and will help integrate the LEP students into the classroom activities.

- If students are literate in their native language, give them a list of vocabulary from the lesson you are teaching and ask them to look for the meanings in a bilingual dictionary.
- Assign copying activities these first days. The students can

  look for certain words in a reading selection and copy the sentences where those words appear;

  copy the titles and subtitles of the chapter being studied and write under each the words that fit from the vocabulary list you have provided, using the textbook;

  complete a cloze exercise prepared on a ditto. The exercise can contain an excerpt of a reading selection from the current lesson, with key vocabulary words missing. At first, students may just copy the words from the textbook or look up words in a bilingual dictionary;

  use the textbook to do a set of short sentence completion exercises;

  copy illustrations, graphs, or maps from the lesson being studied;

  copy notes from the chalkboard;
- Initially, in math classes, have students work only on computation;
- Refer to Chapter III, "The LEP Student in Your Classroom" for other suggestions.

This list is by no means exhaustive. Consult with colleagues who have worked with LEP students, with the reading specialist, or with the ESL teacher in your school. As you find more activities, add them to your file and keep them on hand, since you will probably be working with new LEP students throughout the year.

Summary

You are embarking on a new challenge, and like other professional challenges you have tackled, teaching LEP students will be demanding and enriching. Remember that many other educators are experiencing concerns similar to yours and they, too, are discovering ways to broaden their teaching repertoires to incorporate a new special student population into the classroom. You can expect to have questions along the way; more importantly, you can anticipate numerous rewards. Start by being realistic—do as much as you can do, and start with simple instructional strategies you already know how to use. Others in the school and community can assist and profit from the experience.

II. What Are LEP Students Like?

Students in your classroom come with their own set of experiences, attitudes, and needs. Most teachers make an effort to learn as much as they can about each student so they can teach to the student's strengths and help the student overcome special problems in learning and adapting to school.

Before reading this chapter, please take a few moments to reflect on the characteristics of the students you have taught in the past. For some questions, you may want to check more than one response.

What My Students Have Been Like

1. The reading levels of my students have varied
   ____ one to two grade levels.
   ____ three to four grade levels.
   ____ more than four grade levels.

2. My students value a good education and take school seriously.
   ____ all
   ____ most
   ____ some

3. The parents of my students value a good education and take school seriously.
   ____ all
   ____ most
   ____ some

4. I have taught students who learn best
   ____ in self-directed activities.
   ____ in teacher-directed activities.
   ____ reading books.
   ____ working with peers.
   ____ when academic tasks are highly structured.
   ____ when academic tasks are minimally structured.

5. I have taught students who require special attention because they
   ____ learn more slowly.
   ____ learn through visual experiences.
   ____ learn through auditory experiences.
   ____ learn best alone.
   ____ learn best in groups.
   ____ learn through hands-on activities.

6. My students do their homework
   ____ most of the time.
   ____ occasionally.

7. My students turn their homework in
   ____ on time.
   ____ occasionally late.
   ____ usually late.

8. I have had students who speak a language other than English at home.
   ____ never
   ____ occasionally
   ____ often

9. Most of the students I have taught
   ____ follow directions.
   ____ are highly respectful.
   ____ participate in class activities.
   ____ talk back to teachers.
   ____ have trouble paying attention in class.
   ____ are independent.
   ____ need direction.
   ____ resist authority.

10. After school, most of my students
   ____ participate in extra-curricular activities.
   ____ work.
   ____ hang out.
   ____ care for siblings.
   ____ go home.

Overview

As a teacher, you have undoubtedly worked with students who vary widely in their abilities and experiences. In some ways, the LEP student is simply another unique individual in your classroom. In other ways, students with limited English skills present special challenges to the teacher who is attempting to understand each child.

The behavior of LEP students, some of whom have recently arrived in the United States, is sometimes puzzling to teachers. Their behavior (as ours) reflects their cultural upbringing and their previous experiences in school and in life. The more you know about these cultural and educational differences, the better you will understand the reactions of LEP students who enter your classroom and the more appropriately you can plan educational experiences.

In order to build on children's strengths and help them overcome special problems, you have to know where to begin. Assessing LEP students' level of English proficiency and the extent of their content knowledge presents special challenges to teachers; teachers are often accustomed to children who speak English as their native language and whose test scores and transcripts reflect their achievements.

Finally, understanding LEP students requires some knowledge of what it is like to learn a second language. If you have lived in a foreign country or studied a language other than English in school, you have a basic understanding of second language acquisition. If not, you will find that there are specific strategies to help you teach English as a second language.

Cultural and Educational Differences

There is an old folktale about the monkey who lived in the trees and knew only about life on land. One day, the monkey saw a fish in the water. Thinking that the fish was drowning, the monkey "rescued" it by scooping it from the water and bringing it onto the land.

Many of us are like the monkey. When confronted with differences, we assess the situation from our own perspective and try to convince others to be like us. In some ways we are right; students who come to the United States to live and who attend American schools *will* have to adapt some of their behavior patterns to fit into the new culture. But we must be cautious in making assumptions and jumping to conclusions before we know more about what influences a student's thinking and behavior.

Educational Experiences of LEP Students

The schools many LEP students attended in their countries of origin are often quite different from American schools. In addition, many LEP students have views and attitudes about education that are different from those held by American students. While it would be inappropriate to generalize about the experiences and attitudes of all LEP students, it may be helpful to identify some fairly typical patterns.

Many LEP students come from countries where

- teachers are among the most respected people in the community.
- education is held in high esteem.

- the student-teacher relationship is formal and classes are conducted in a traditional manner.
- teachers are addressed as "Teacher."
- teachers lecture and students listen.
- teachers are expected to help students with their private lives. (It's not unusual for a student to call a respected teacher at home to discuss personal problems and seek advice.)
- schools may be in session six days a week.
- factual recall, rote memorization, and written work are emphasized.
- young students may receive three to four hours of homework a night.
- corporal punishment is acceptable.
- students are not offered a choice in subjects they want to study.
- schools are separated by sex.
- parents rarely participate in education. (They trust the teacher and only come to school in an emergency.)
- schooling has been disrupted by wars. (Some LEP students may never have attended school.)

How LEP Students View American Students

Considering these experiences, it is not surprising that many LEP students are shocked by American culture and the behavior of students and teachers. One secondary teacher in Arlington, Virginia, asked her LEP students to write an essay on the American teenager. She learned a great deal about how foreign students view American culture. These LEP students wrote that:

- American teenagers behave poorly in school by

  arriving late;

  cutting classes;

  making noise;

  saying bad words to the teacher;

  not completing their homework.
- American teenagers have no respect for their parents who

  don't know what their children are doing;

  are afraid of their children.
- Young people in America have too much freedom as evidenced by

  their unwillingness to listen to anyone except their peers;

  their lack of interest in the future and their tendency to live only for today.
- Teachers don't ask for respect because they

  allow students to call them by their first names;

  sit on desks and talk informally with students;

  don't punish students who fail to do their homework.
- Schools in the United States are informal and there are few rules.

Common Misunderstandings

Children who are accustomed to a different approach to education will undoubtedly misunderstand some aspects of education in American schools. Teachers who are not accustomed to working with LEP students will also make mistakes. No one can be expected to become knowledgeable in all cultural differences. What *is* important is to be sensitive to students' reactions and to recognize that beliefs or experiences may have influenced their behavior. Here are some common errors in judgment teachers have made.

- Haphazardly pairing students to work together on a project.

  In many Asian cultures, girls and boys are *never* asked to work together; only students of the same sex are paired. In many Latin American countries, students are seldom grouped for academic projects.

Social status and political differences can interfere with students' ability to work together.

- Insisting that a student look you "in the eye" when you are talking.

  Asian children are taught that looking an elder "in the eye" is a sign of disrespect.

  Latin American children are taught not to make eye contact when being scolded.

- Using physical contact to reassure a student and show affection.

  Indochinese students may be insulted when someone touches them on the head.

- Gesturing to a child to come to you.

  To the Vietnamese, this hand gesture is used only to call animals.

  To some Latin Americans, the same gesture means goodbye.

- Giving lots of praise to a student.

  Asians have a strong sense of humbleness and feel uncomfortable about accepting compliments.

- Assuming that it's strange when two adolescent males walk arm in arm.

  This is perfectly acceptable behavior in Korea and in the Middle East.

  In Latin America, male students may walk with their arm slung casually over the shoulder of another.

- Assuming a student who doesn't volunteer or ask questions is withdrawn or shy.

  Many LEP students are not accustomed to volunteering or asking questions in class.

- Discouraging dependency and the sharing of personal problems.

  Latin American students expect teachers to guide them, and they seek this type of relationship.

  In Latin American schools, it is common for students to talk with their teachers about family problems, to stay after class and ask the teacher's advice and assistance.

- Assuming that a student who doesn't ask questions or claims to understand something actually does understand.

  Students often think they understand when they don't.

  Impassivity doesn't mean lack of emotion.

  Asian students don't want to lose face in front of the teacher by asking questions or making a mistake.

- Insisting that a student drink/eat milk products or eat beef or pork.

  Most Indochinese cannot tolerate lactic acid and will react to consumption of milk until their digestive system adjusts.

  Many Latin American students are not in the habit of drinking milk and may dislike it. (Often milk has been watered down and used in coffee or in cooking.)

  Some cultures prohibit certain foods we eat all the time.

Please add your own observations and "faux pas" and share them with other teachers.

_____

_____

_____

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_____

Encouraging/Discouraging Behavior

Recognizing cultural differences does not mean that all behavior allowed in the student's country of origin is allowed here. Some behavior is simply not acceptable and must be discouraged. For example:

- We do not expect students to establish dominance among their peers through physical strength.
- We do not allow "helping others" while taking a test.
- We do not permit a student to attack with a weapon, even if the student is defending his family's honor and such behavior is expected.
- We do not permit cutting into line.
- We do not expect students to snap their fingers when they want the teacher's attention.

Some behaviors must be encouraged or explicitly taught to LEP students.

- Sitting quietly in class may be appropriate in other cultures, but here students are expected to participate, to volunteer, and to ask questions.

  Explain that this is not showing off.

  Give lots of experiences in oral give and take in non-threatening situations.

  Start with simple "yes" and "no" questions first.
- Teachers are addressed as Mr. _____ or Ms. _____ , not as "Teacher."
- Students are not expected to stand up when addressed by the teacher or when addressing the teacher.
- In instructional situations, it may be acceptable to copy from each other and to help another student. In testing situations it is not.

  You may have to separate students physically during a test so they can't copy from one another.

How to Extend Your Knowledge of Other Cultures

While daily interactions and conversations with other teachers can help you learn a great deal about cultural and educational differences, you may feel a need for other sources of information. Your community is one place to start. You may

- visit students at home and talk with parents.
- talk with community leaders from different ethnic groups and invite them to school to talk with a small group of interested teachers.
- contact refugee organizations in your area; they will undoubtedly have staff members who would be glad to share information.
- contact churches and temples which serve a particular ethnic group.
- check with universities or agencies that may have special resources, programs in bilingual education, or other programs for LEP students.

It's helpful to know what questions to ask when you set out to learn about cultural and educational differences. Here are some suggestions, grouped under five categories.

1. **Educational System and Curriculum in the Student's Country**

- Is education generally available? Compulsory? To what age?
- Is the curriculum centrally controlled? By whom?
- What is the most frequently used teaching methodology? (Kind of learning favored: e.g., inductive, deductive, experiential)
- Is there a physical education program? Who participates in sports?
- Are there elective courses? What are they?
- What is the general attitude toward the teaching profession?
- Are there separate classes for boys and girls?
- What is the school environment most frequently like? (traditional, open)
- How are students disciplined?

2. Social Attitudes

- What forms of address are used for: teacher-to-student and student-to-student?
- What is the student's attitude towards teachers?
- When are first names used in addressing someone?
- How do students show courtesy to teachers?
- What behavior is expected in class?
- How do people show respect?
- How do people show disagreement with each other? With elders?
- When do people smile? Frown? Show anger? What do these facial expressions mean?

3. Teaching-Learning Strategies

- Are the students dependent on the teacher for information?
- Is dictation frequently used?
- Are students encouraged to ask questions when they do not understand?
- To what extent is competition fostered in the learning process? Cooperation?
- Are team projects encouraged?
- Is the learning situation visually oriented? Verbally oriented?
- To what extent do students take the initiative in class?
- Are students expected to contribute information to the class?
- Are students allowed to ask other students for assistance? To move around during class? Change seats? Talk during class?

4. Promotion and Grading System

- How often are assignments given?
- Are quizzes and tests usually oral or written? How often are they given?
- When are examinations given? For what purpose?
- What are the conditions for promotion?
- Is grading done by letters or numbers? What do the numbers or letters represent?
- What kinds of written examinations are given? Objective? Essay?

5. Classroom Management

- What is the usual physical arrangement of the classroom?
- How are the students' desks or benches arranged?
- Do boys and girls work together or do students work only with others of the same sex?
- Do students move from class to class or stay in the same room?
- Where is the teacher in the classroom? Does he/she walk around? Stand up?
- Are there breaks between classes?
- How many students are usually in a class?

The **Resource Book for Building English Proficiency** contains other sources of information on cultural and educational differences of LEP students (pages 39-47). You may want to read more extensively about the specific ethnic groups in your classroom.

As you learn more about the influence of culture and education, you may find that you are also learning about yourself. This is an added benefit. All of us behave in ways that reflect our cultural and educational experiences. Because many of us (in the United States) have spent our lives living in one culture, we tend to be less aware of how culture affects our behavior and beliefs.

Think over what you learned in this section about cultural and educational differences. In what ways have *your* experiences and beliefs influenced the ways in which you relate to students?

_____

_____

_____

Assessment

- Which students are LEP?
- How much do they know?
- When can they be mainstreamed?

Decisions about the education of LEP students have to be based on an assessment of who they are, what they know, and what they need. School districts often assess LEP students for many different purposes. Students may be assessed to

- identify the LEP population in a school or school district;
- place students in a grade;
- place students in a program;
- determine level of language skills;
- determine content knowledge;
- measure LEP students' gains in a given program;
- determine when the LEP student is no longer LEP;
- identify learning problems.

Identifying the LEP Population

School districts need to identify their LEP population to assess the extent of the need for a special program and to decide on the services they will offer. In general, the identification of LEP students is performed on the basis of demographic data such as age, socio-economic status, previous education in their country and in the United States, date of entry to the United States, language spoken at home, and some measurement of English proficiency. (See sample form on page 54 of the **Resource Book**.)

Initially English proficiency can be determined through an oral interview. Interviews, which can be easily adapted to elementary and secondary students, can be taped and analyzed later. Results from the interview can provide a general idea of a student's ability to understand and to communicate orally in English. When analyzing interviews, attention should be paid to two types of errors: those that interfere with communication, and those that are repeated frequently. (See sample interview on pages 55-61 of the **Resource Book**.) An oral interview might include questions about:

- basic personal information: e.g., age, grade, address, family members;
- directions such as sit down, stand up, open your book to page, bring me the object.

Questions should elicit the use of basic structures: e.g., present/past tense, singular/plurals, etc.

A more comprehensive assessment covering all four basic language skills, as well as background information on the students, should be made before placing them into an instructional program.

Placing LEP Students in a Grade

In general, LEP students should be placed with their peers. Those students under 14 years of age who have had little schooling and are therefore academically behind for their age group should be kept within one year of their chronological age group. Students in secondary school should be placed according to their school records. If no records exist, they should be placed in grade nine so that they have time to accumulate the credits they need to graduate from high school.

One common error in placing LEP students is to put them in classes several years behind their age group. This is done for several reasons. Administrators may assume that this placement gives the students more time to learn English. Another justification is that many refugee students, particularly from Asian countries, are smaller than their American peers; administrators may believe that the age differences will not be as obvious. However, LEP students are generally as mature as their American peers, and placing them with younger children can make them lose self-esteem and interest in school.

Secondary students with very low English proficiency should be placed in ESL classes instead of in courses that rely heavily on textbooks and

require a lot of reading—for example, social studies or non-laboratory sciences. Students should be able to participate in courses where they have demonstrated skills or talents such as mathematics, drawing, dance, sewing, etc.

At the secondary level, it is important to realize that the educational background of LEP students might determine how well they progress in school. For example, if students have had previous education in their native language comparable to that of their classmates, they might be able to fulfill graduation requirements and graduate with their age group. But if LEP students have had little or no education, the fulfillment of graduation requirements in four years or less might not be a realistic goal. They may have to complete their education under an adult education program. Emphasis should be placed on mastery of specially designed goals and objectives for obtaining credit.

The extent of native language development in both conversational and literacy skills is also a determinant of how well the student can do. The more proficient the student is in his/her native language, the better he/she will do in learning English and the academic skills needed to succeed in school. Therefore, if the school cannot provide for the continuation of native language development, teachers should encourage parents to provide an environment where the student can continue developing skills in his/her native language. Parents should encourage their children to speak the native language at home, read, write to friends and relatives in their countries of origin, and watch native language films and shows. Contrary to the earlier interference theory, recent research has found that development and maintenance of the native language aids in the acquisition of the second language.* For more information on this topic, consult *Schooling and Language Minority Students: A Theoretical Framework*. (See **Resource Book,** page 74.)

Placing Students in a Program

LEP students need special English language instruction, even if it is no more than an hour or two a day. LEP students will learn English more quickly if they are given specific instruction. Someone in the school or school district should be assigned to provide this service. If it is necessary to use a volunteer for language instruction, it is equally necessary to provide the volunteer with support and guidance. Depending on the number of LEP students at a given grade level, students can be grouped across classes (e.g., all fourth grade students together) or across ages (e.g., 7-, 8-, and 9-year-olds placed together for special instruction.) Care should be taken not to place students who are far apart in age even though their level of proficiency in English might be the same.

Before placing students, a school or school district needs to perform a comprehensive assessment of the students' English proficiency. This assessment should include testing for all four basic language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The section on "Assessment of LEP Students" in the **Resource Book** (pages 49-61) contains annotated references of tests that can be used in assessing language proficiency.

Whether or not your school district has established language assessment procedures, you need to know how much the student knows so that you can determine what needs you must address first. Knowledge and skills assessment is just as important with LEP students as with other students. However, the means for assessing differ.

Teachers of LEP students engage frequently in diagnostic activities in order to keep the students' programs on track. Initially, teachers know less about LEP students because school records have not been accumulated over the years. It is essential that the teacher or other education professionals find out about the student, both academically and personally.

*Cummins, James. "The Role of Primary Language Development in Promoting Educational Success for Language Minority Students," *Schooling and Language Minority Students: A Theoretical Framework* 1982. Evaluation Dissemination and Assessment Center, Los Angeles, California (pages 3-49).

Assessing Language Skills

Before assessing English skills, determine whether the student is literate in his/her own language. Many LEP students come from war-torn countries where they attended school sporadically, if at all. To determine if a student is literate in his/her own language, you will need something written in that language for the student to read and someone to conduct the assessment and interpret the results. The **Resource Book** page 53 contains more information about the use of native language speakers in testing LEP students.

When assessing LEP students for English language proficiency, informal methods are more realistic guides than the standardized tests that are often used. When assessing language proficiency informally, however, make sure you attend to the four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Listening and Speaking

- ***Interviewing:*** Talk with the student individually. Ask questions and give simple commands. Have the student name objects. Have the student talk about himself/herself. Listen for vocabulary, structures, and pronunciation. Refer to page 15 in this **Handbook** for more details about the interview approach.

- ***Dictation:*** Dictation can be very effective in testing a student's ability to process language. Students must be able to hear and discriminate sounds and to reproduce them in writing.

  To administer a dictation task you can:

  1. Read the selection at a conversational pace.
  2. Read the selection with pauses, preferably at natural breaking points, and give punctuation.
  3. Read again to give students the opportunity to check what they have written.

  Dictation can also be partial, with one part of the selection printed and another blank for students to complete during dictation.

  For more information about dictation and other speaking tasks, consult John W. Oller's *Language Tests at School*. 1979. pages 262-302. (See page 53 of the **Resource Book** for a complete reference.)

Reading

- ***Silent Reading for Comprehension:*** If the student can engage in conversation, ask him/her to read a page from your text or from a graded reader. After the student has read, ask different types of questions: e.g., recalling facts, drawing conclusions, making inferences, determining the title or main idea.

  Another way of using silent reading for comprehension is to have the student read a passage silently and then retell the story in his/her own words.

  These techniques are designed to help you draw general conclusions about the student's ability to comprehend what he/she reads. Students may fall into one of the following categories: unable to recall information; able to recall information but not able to make inferences; or able to process all comprehension questions.

- ***Informal Reading Inventory:*** The Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) is a more complex reading assessment which tests both oral reading and comprehension. The IRI is based on a set of graded readers, beginning with readiness and proceeding through grade six or higher. The student proceeds through each level until an instructional or frustration level is reached. Before attempting to use this approach, make sure to ask the assistance of a reading specialist in your school or school district.

- ***Cloze Tests:*** The Cloze Test is a very reliable and versatile method of assessing comprehension and reading. It can be used at all levels and for a variety of purposes:

  - to judge readability of materials;
  - to estimate reading comprehension;

- to estimate overall language proficiency;
- to evaluate student progress.

For more detailed information about the many uses of Cloze tests, consult John Oller's *Language Tests at School*, 1979, pages 340-380. (See **Resource Book** page 53.)

To administer a Cloze Test, select a self-contained passage from a text or your own current materials. The passage should treat topics assumed to be within the experience of the examinees. Go through the passage and systematically delete every fifth, sixth, or seventh word. Skip proper names and technical words; just go to the next word and continue deleting. To supply a beginning and an ending for each passage, leave the first one or two sentences and the last one or two sentences intact.

Because a Cloze Test is a power test, not a speed test, it should be administered on an *untimed* basis. Give clear instructions to the students. You may wish to put a few sample sentences on the chalkboard before beginning the test.

To score, count the number of correct responses. Responses are correct if they are *contextually* appropriate. Do not look for exact word responses. Calculate the percent of correct answers.

If you are using the Cloze test to determine readability of the material, refer to the following table for interpretation of the results.

Writing

- ***Functional Writing:*** To test the functional writing ability of a secondary student, provide a simple form for the student to fill in his/her name and address, age, sex, family members. If the student cannot fill out the form, give an alphabet test. Ask the student to

  Fill in the blanks (use upper and lower case letters.)
  A B C __ E F G __ H I J __ etc.

  Point to different letters out of sequence.

  Copy the letters of the alphabet.

- ***More Difficult Writing Tasks (Secondary):***

  Ask the student to write a paragraph on any topic: e.g., my family; my first day in school; two differences between my country of origin and the United States.

  Ask the student to retell in writing a story he or she has recently heard.

- ***Assessing Elementary Students:***

  Use the alphabet test mentioned above. You can also show the student a picture and ask him/her to write five sentences about it.

- ***Additional Writing Assessment Task:***

  Ask students to fill in the details in an incomplete story. This task can be used with students at any level.

Percent of Correct Answers	Comprehension Level
53% and above	**Independent Level:** Material is not difficult for the student; student can read and understand without help.
44% to 52%	**Instructional Level:** Material is challenging but not too difficult for the student to read and understand; student will need occasional help.
Below 44%	**Frustration Level:** Material is too difficult for instructional purposes.

It is important to observe not only what the student does, but how long it takes, how she/he holds a pencil, handwriting, directionality, and motor skills. When scoring writing samples, always look first for the idea the examinee has tried to convey.

Determining Level of Proficiency

The previous suggestions for assessing a student's understanding and level of speaking, reading, and writing skills are helpful in identifying a general level of overall proficiency in English. The following categories may be useful in determining what level the student has attained in English proficiency.*

- **Beginning Proficiency** (minimal comprehension)
  Can pick up previously learned vocabulary from the general blur of English. Can follow simple directions and conversations.

  "Sit down."

  "Erase the board."

  "Good morning."

  "How are you?"

  Can express ideas, ask and give simple directions related to home, school, daily routines.
- **Intermediate Proficiency** (marginal comprehension)
  Recognizes phrases and can usually grasp the general topic of conversation on non-technical subjects. Can ask for and understand explanations in simple terminology.

  "Can I go to lunch?"

  "Please do pages 11-13 in your notebook."

  Can talk in some detail on concrete subjects such as own background, family, current events, school, and other familiar places. Can read simple material. Can write but has many errors.
- **Advanced Intermediate Proficiency** (minimally functional comprehension of content)
  Able to attach meaning to clauses and sentences. Understands general spoken language but has vocabulary deficits in subject areas and often in some areas of general information.
- **Advanced Proficiency**
  Speaks language with sufficient structural accuracy and vocabulary to participate in most formal and informal conversations on school-related and social topics. Can do many of the assignments. May read and write with varying degrees of difficulty.

Assessing Content Knowledge

Teachers of older students will need to assess content knowledge. A way of learning about the student's academic subjects knowledge base is through a review of transcripts from the schools the student attended in his/her country or the country he/she came from. If transcripts are not available, you might want to use an informal placement test that is given in the native language through an interpreter. You will first need to determine what concepts or skills you want to test and prepare a sequence of questions or a task for the student to complete. Some simple tests to assess arithmetic skills follow.

- Ask the student to count.
- Have the student fill in the missing numbers.
  0, 1, 2, __ , 4, 5, 6, __ , 8, 9, 10, __ , 12, etc.
- If the student cannot fill in the sequence of numbers, ask him or her to copy the numbers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
__	__	__	__	__	__	__	__

*Adapted from Jonz, Jon, *An Overview of the Language Assessment Materials*. Prepared in cooperation with the School District of Lancaster, Bilingual/ESL Program, 1975-76; and Taylor, Harvey M., "Learning to Listen in English."

- Give the student simple addition and subtraction problems.
- Give division problems in a format the student understands. Many students are taught to divide in this manner: 538/26 instead of 26/538. When correcting students' work with decimals, make sure you don't misinterpret their use of commas and periods. In many countries, students learn to use commas to separate decimal points and periods to indicate thousands.

Measuring Student Progress

LEP students' gains in a given program should be assessed on the basis of the objectives and the materials that have been covered in class. When constructing tests, teachers must first define what is being tested so that the student is not shortchanged. When constructing tests for LEP students, you should

- be specific about your purpose for testing.
- be sure you are testing the skill you wish to assess and not the ability to follow the directions.
- consider the mode of the stimulus and response in light of students' language ability and developmental levels.
- be consistent in wording of directions, and in stems of items.
- be aware of the difference in level of language processing required for completion items and question items.
- be aware that in a multiple-choice test; the longer the stem and the greater the number of choices, the more language the student has to process.
- teach test-taking skills by constructing some tests using format and directions similar to standardized tests.
- Use the same language in the test that has been used in class when the topic was taught and discussed.
- be sure students are familiar with the format of the test: e.g., multiple choice, true and false, essay.
- score the test on the basis of content, concentrating on the idea the student wanted to get across, not the form.

Group administrated standardized tests are not recommended to measure achievement. Their purpose is not to determine how much a student has learned, but to describe how this student compares with other students in his/her age and grade level in some general skill area. Standardized tests are often normed on groups of students who have different backgrounds from your LEP students, so most probably those norms do not apply to your student. Most of the assessment techniques described in the previous pages can be used before and after lessons or units to measure gains in language development between major pre- and posttests.

The article, "Tests, Achievement, and Bilingual Students" by James Cummins gives an overview of the inadequacies of the use of ability and achievement tests with LEP students and presents research findings that explain the relationship between language proficiency and academic achievement. (See **Resource Book**, page 52.)

Determining When a Student Is No Longer LEP

School districts need to establish assessment procedures to determine when a student is ready to be mainstreamed completely. Researchers have found that if a student comes to a second language situation after the age of six, he/she will probably take two years to learn the basic conversational skills needed to function socially, and from five to seven years to acquire the academic skills needed to function at the level of his/her peers. The time needed to learn both the conversational and academic language skills depends also on the state of native language and academic development at the time of arrival. As was discussed earlier, the more advanced those skills are, the faster the student

will transfer them into the acquisition of those skills in the second language.*

Some of the implications of these findings are

- Students will show a faster development of conversational skills than of academic skills.
- Some students will be ready to be mainstreamed faster than others.
- Some students will probably need special support all through their schooling in the United States, especially if they come to high school with low academic background.

To determine if a student can be completely mainstreamed, a school or school district needs to determine entry/exit criteria. Entry/exit criteria can be developed on the basis of a battery of tests that would assess the extent to which the student's listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills will permit him/her to achieve academically.

Identifying Learning Problems in LEP Students

Teachers who have not worked with LEP students before find it very difficult to differentiate between lack of language development and learning disabilities. These teachers tend to refer LEP students to Educable Mentally Retarded (EMR) or Special Education classes because they do not see them progressing at the rate they may have anticipated. School districts should be cautious in assessing learning problems in LEP students so that they do not place them in programs where they do not belong and where they would be drawn further behind in their language and academic development.

The assessment of learning problems of LEP students should be conducted by certified psychologists who know the language of the student and who are knowledgeable about the tests that can be used with these students. School districts should consult with the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education or their Bilingual Education Service Center (BESC) before a LEP student is tested for learning disabilities.

Looking Back on Assessment

Assessment of students is, at best, a difficult task. Even with English-speaking students, many factors can influence how a student performs at any given time. With LEP students, there are infinitely more influencing factors. Consider the following suggestions in assessing your LEP students.

- Trust your observation skills as a teacher. You can learn a great deal from observing the student in your classroom. For example:

  Does the student arrive with a notebook, a dictionary, pens and pencils?

  How quickly does the student learn to follow a schedule?

  Does the student relate to other students?

  Does the student take notes and copy from the chalkboard as you lecture?

  Does the student appear to be concentrating on the lessons or do his/her eyes glaze over after the first few minutes?

  How "mature" is the student's handwriting?

- Recognize that progress in English is not always an indication of ability to function. Some students learn the basic social language skills easily. This ability does not necessarily mean the student is prepared to function academically.
- Often, in order to avoid embarrassment, students will say they understand when, in fact, they do not. Therefore, use more than one approach to assess understanding.

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*Cummins, James. "The Role of Primary Language Development in Promoting Educational Success for Language Minority Students." *Schooling and Language Minority Students: A Theoretical Framework.* 1982. Evaluation Dissemination and Assessment Center, Los Angeles, CA.

- Do not use written work as a guide unless you saw the student do it.
- Some students are reluctant to ask for help because they are afraid the teacher will think they are stupid. Therefore, it is best to offer help as you see it is needed.
- Don't compare students—each will learn at his or her own pace.

The profile of the abilities and skills of a LEP student can only be drawn from a combination of assessment measures that take into consideration cultural, educational, and socio-economic background as well as measurement of language and academic skills.

What It's Like to Learn a Second Language

If you have ever studied a second language in school, you know that some people pick up a new language easily and others have to struggle with both meaning and pronunciation. You probably know some people who "have an ear" for language and speak it "like a native." Others can't make their lips and tongue move correctly to produce the strange sounds no matter how hard they try. Think about your own experiences learning a second language. How were you taught? Did you

- memorize vocabulary lists out of context?
- spend hours conjugating verbs?
- write the same vocabulary words 50 times?
- repeat meaningless phrases over and over in mindless drills?
- memorize rules you never had to apply?
- memorize exceptions to the rules you never had to use?
- learn and remember content that was irrelevant to your life?
- hear the new language spoken by only one person, your teacher?
- forget most of what you learned?

If you checked most of the questions above, you may not have fond memories of learning a second language . . . .and probably, you didn't learn it! If, however, you successfully learned a second language, the chances are you

- learned new vocabulary in a meaningful context;
- heard the second language spoken by many different speakers;
- had many opportunities to communicate with others in the second language;
- engaged in action-oriented activities to clarify meanings and functions of the new language;
- used repetition as it occurred naturally in songs, poems, games, stories, and rhymes instead of repetitive drills (especially appropriate for young students);
- spent some time on drill work (especially appropriate for secondary students);
- were highly motivated to learn the second language;
- took advantage of every opportunity to practice the new language, regardless of level of fluency;
- learned to read and write the language as you learned to speak it;

If the second list parallels your own experiences, you know firsthand how students learn a second language. But regardless of how successful or unsuccessful your own experiences were, good common sense and your instinctive knowledge of how children learn can guide you in helping students with limited English proficiency learn a second language. It's important to know that

- there are similarities as well as differences between first and second language acquisition.
- a lot of language learning takes place naturally in conversations and through lessons in the content area as well as lessons in English.

- there are four aspects of language that the LEP student must master—pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, and style;
- social and affective factors influence how quickly a student learns a second language; and
- there is a difference between academic and conversational language.

Similarities and Differences Between First and Second Language Acquisition*

Observing how a young child makes sense of language and learns to speak provides us some understanding of how children learn a second language. Children need to listen to language for a long time and begin to make some sense of it before they are ready to attempt speaking it. Their actions show that they understand long before they use the words themselves.

It is a well-established fact that students who have a good understanding of their first language will usually be successful in learning a second language. Their skills in reading, writing, and speaking their first language are readily transferred to acquiring fluency in the second language. This fact has important implications for teaching LEP students. If resources— e.g., books, bilingual instructors—are available in the school to strengthen the student's first language, his/her cognitive development as well as the ability to learn English will be advanced. If such resources are not available, parents should be encouraged to read to their children in their language of origin and to teach them concepts. Contrary to popular belief, it is not necessarily a disadvantage if parents of LEP students do not speak English.

The key to both first and second language acquisition is *meaning*. Children remember language that is meaningful to them. As children begin to talk, they do so for a functional purpose: to get something they want; to obtain or provide information; to express emotions and feelings. Children need to see an immediate and practical purpose for the language they are learning. One way many children can practice meaningful language is through social interactions with their peers.

Another similarity between first and second language acquisition is the way children form new words and phrases. Rather than simply imitating what they hear, children learn by putting together bits of language in order to communicate. They do not begin with perfectly formed, grammatically correct sentences. Errors are a natural part of learning language. We can expect incomplete or incorrect language from children learning either a first or second language. As they attempt to match the language to the models around them, they will gradually correct themselves.

The more opportunities children have to practice language, the more quickly they acquire fluency. Children who enjoy playing with language, repeating sounds, rhyming words even nonsensically, are often the best language learners.

The most obvious difference between first and second language acquisition is the age of the learner. Older students bring more experiences and skills to the learning process. They are developmentally more mature and can abstract the rules of grammar more quickly. They know how language works and how to use it to meet their own set of social needs. This knowledge helps them to learn to communicate in a second language. However, students who have gaps in the prerequisite knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, and reading skills in their first language need special help or tutoring to be able to read, write cohesive compositions, do library work, work in a group situation, etc. Younger students, on the other hand, tend to learn correct pronunciation and oral language more easily. They are more receptive to learning the strange sounds and to practicing them in play situations.

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*Adapted from "Applications of Second Language Acquisition Research to the Bilingual Classroom" by Anna Uhl Chamot, *FOCUS*, National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, No. 8, September 1981. (See **Resource Book** pages 66-73.)

The similarities and differences between first and second language acquisition have several implications for teaching. Teachers should

- expect errors as a natural part of language learning and not be overly concerned about correcting these errors;
- model correct use of English;
- respond to what they think the student is trying to communicate;
- create situations in which students can learn language for functional purposes;
- expect a "silent period" in the beginning stages of the language learning process, and plan listening activities before expecting students to speak;
- provide repetition when it occurs naturally in games, songs, and rhymes rather than repetitive drills, especially for younger students;
- allow students to use words from their first language to communicate as they are learning more of the second language;
- expect that younger students may learn to *communicate* more quickly in the second language than older students; and
- expect that older students will learn the syntax of the language more accurately and sooner than younger students.

Learning Language Through Conversation

Students can learn language naturally through conversations with their peers and with teachers. In this context, students acquire a new language holistically rather than as a set of linguistic rules. The more opportunities they have to practice, the quicker they will learn the new language.

Linda Ventriglia* describes the language-learning strategies children employ in their conversations. The chart on the following pages outlines these strategies and their implications for teachers. As you think about the LEP students in your classroom, consider if you have observed them employing these language-learning strategies. Then ask yourself, "Have I encouraged students to use these strategies in my classroom?"

*Ventriglia, Linda. *Conversations of Miguel and Maria, How Children Learn a Second Language*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1982.

Students learn a second language by:	Therefore the teacher should:
Bridging: tying English words to concepts which are known in their first language.	• Teach words in meaningful contexts—with concrete objects or pictures. • Group words by concepts. • Utilize all senses in teaching vocabulary (touch, smell, sight, etc.).
Chunking: picking up and imitating chunks of language, phrases, or units of more than one word that are remembered as a whole. The chunks serve as a transition from labeling to sentence fluency.	• Provide opportunities for students to imitate language chunks they hear in meaningful activities involving concrete materials, i.e., charts and games. • Act as a model, constructing appropriate language chunks, responding to each student's repetition of chunks, reinforcing and validating verbal responses.
Creating: forming original utterances from previously learned words and chunks with language. Students do this best in conversations or in game-like situations where language is used meaningfully.	• Provide opportunities for students to engage in role-playing activities where they can hear and use the language. • Comment on group activities and engage students in communicating about what they are doing. • Structure language lessons around interpersonal communication in meaningful situations.
Listening and Sounding Out: learning language through listening for an extended period of time before producing it.	• Proceed from receptive understanding to expressive practice. • Provide group activities that develop listening comprehension: storytelling, music, drama, rhymes, and oral reports. • Provide individual activities such as listening to records or tapes accompanied by visual aids, short stories, or filmstrips.

Students learn a second language by:	Therefore the teacher should:
Following the Phrase: using familiar phrases over and over. Student practices known phrases and varies them by changing words that follow the phrase: e.g., I like cookies. I like grapes. I like you.	• Provide opportunities for students to generate and use patterns in social situations. • Teach children a phrase such as "I eat ____" and apply the phrase in a relevant manner using concrete objects and pictures.
Socializing: learning social expressions as chunks—imitating expressions heard in social exchanges and applying them in appropriate social settings. The learner is motivated by a desire to become part of the social world of English speakers.	• Provide many opportunities for students to interact with native English speakers. • Emphasize active language use in all activities. • Group students so that those with limited English are learning and those with greater ability are teaching and using what they have learned. • Encourage participation in extracurricular activities.
Using Cues: using gestures, context or other visual clues as hints to determine the meaning of new words or phrases. Students learn to scan the environment for a cue, make a hypothesis, assess the probability that the inference is correct, and readjust to later information.	• Use all types of cues to help students obtain meaning. • Make your teaching methods as visually oriented as possible.
Peer Prompting: repeating words or phrases a peer has used until it is said correctly. Students come to rely on peers as language models. Peer prompting gives the learner feedback on the correct words needed in a given situation.	• Foster and encourage learning in which students can freely exchange ideas on common intellectual tasks. • Pair LEP students with English-speaking peers for small group activities.

Four Aspects of Language Learning*

The first challenge in learning a new language is to learn to *understand and pronounce* strange words. At first, the sounds of another language are a meaningless stream of sounds. It takes time for a student to begin to recognize familiar sounds, to discriminate between sounds, and to learn how to reproduce the sounds that involve unfamiliar lip and tongue movements. Students must learn to hear the differences between sounds and to reproduce the sounds so that they can be understood.

Learning a new language also involves learning its *structure*—e.g., how to link words in sentences. Students will have difficulty communicating if they learn vocabulary and how to pronounce words but not how to use words in a grammatically correct sequence. Consider a letter sent to the Center for Applied Linguistics:*

"I'm is refugees from Vietnam please help me gives some books . . . "(page 76)

When people do not know the correct sequence for linking words, they will arrange words in the sequence that is correct in their native language. Students must be taught correct sentence structures in English. For example:

This is a _____ .
These are _____ .
Is this a _____ ?
Are these _____ ?

A third aspect of learning a new language is learning *vocabulary*. New vocabulary is most efficiently learned in context. Memorizing lists of vocabulary words is not as effective as using words over and over in meaningful situations. The very fact that LEP students are attending American schools means they will be exposed to English in real life situations. However, they must be specifically taught the correct terminology for each subject area.

Finally, students must be able to use various *styles of English*. In the classroom, the style of English taught is formal and similar to written English. However, in real life, students often learn a different style, sometimes referred to as "playground English." Confusion over which style of English is appropriate in a given situation is a common problem for students learning a second language. It's important to help students recognize the different styles and learn when they are appropriate.

Social and Affective Factors in Learning a Second Language

Motivation is a key factor in determining how quickly students learn a second language. Students who wish to participate with the dominant cultural group and have positive feelings toward American peers can usually overcome most of the obstacles to learning English. Those students who have less than positive feelings about native English-speaking peers and who feel discouraged about achieving success in American schools may find it extremely difficult to acquire English proficiency.

The implications for teachers are obvious. Teachers should

- promote caring and positive attitudes between LEP students and their American peers;
- provide opportunities for students to work in small groups on cooperative activities;
- ensure opportunities for social interaction between LEP students and English-speaking peers;
- promote understanding and acceptance of cultural differences; and
- encourage children to practice the language they are learning.

Academic vs. Conversational Language

The language needed for successful academic work is not necessarily learned through conversations or social situations. Reading and writing skills and the vocabulary needed for academic subjects must be taught in the context of learning activities in each subject area.

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*Adapted from *Indochinese Students in U.S. Schools*, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC, 1981, pages 74-78.

It is important to differentiate between the processes involved in using language for informal interpersonal communication and using language in academic situations. Many LEP students, especially younger children, develop an ability to communicate in everyday situations quite rapidly, leading teachers to believe that they also possess the academic proficiency needed to succeed in school, when, in fact, they might have not developed that ability.

The language used in everyday situations is easier to acquire because it becomes meaningful through the support of non-verbal and external context cues. The language used in academic situations, on the other hand, relies almost exclusively on linguistic forms.

Students develop language proficiency in intercommunicative situations with peers and adults both outside and in school. This initial language ability, which is almost completely developed by age six, needs to move into an ability to process language without the help of contextual and nonverbal cues. Academic language proficiency is needed to succeed in cognitive tasks such as discussions, reading, and writing.

For further information, consult the article "The Role of Primary Language Development in Promoting Educational Success for Language Minority Students" by James Cummins in *Schooling and Language Minority Students: A Theoretical Framework*, **Resource Book** p. 74. Also see the following sections in the **Resource Book**:

- Culture and the Classroom Teacher (pages 39-47.)
- Teaching Strategies for Working With LEP Students (pages 77-86.)
- Assessment of LEP Students (pages 52-61.)
- Learning a Second Language (pages 65-75.)

Summary

In your experience as a teacher, you have taught many students whose needs, interests, and skills vary. The LEP student is another individual for whom you will adapt your teaching methodology. In meeting the instructional needs of LEP students, however, you will want to be receptive to cultural and educational differences and to the special experience in which they are engaged—learning a second language.

As a teacher of LEP students, you will learn to value and capitalize upon cultural and educational differences in the classroom. You will find out about schooling in other countries, and you will learn about your own classroom through the students for whom the classroom is a new and sometimes strange experience.

You will need to try to recognize your own biases and assumptions and be a bit slow in judging the behavior of students who are unfamiliar with American customs and practices. At the same time, there will be rules and values you want to protect, and you must teach these basics to LEP students.

When the pace of getting started slows, you will want to learn more about the culture and education system in the countries of origin represented in your classroom. You may want to take some time to explore the basic structure of the school system and the standard curriculum, some social attitudes as they are reflected in the schools, the predominant teaching and learning strategies, procedures for promoting and grading students, and classroom management techniques.

Assessment will be particularly important in teaching LEP students. Tests can be formal and informal, providing a wide range of useful information. Minimally, assessment of students should tell you about their language competency, knowledge of content areas, and personal background including schooling history, family information, special needs and interests, and biographical data.

As you launch your instructional program, you will want to understand what learning a second language is like so that you can teach with sensitivity to the LEP student's needs. Learning a second language is not unlike learning a first language. However, because students are older and more experienced, they bring both talents and inhibitions to the classroom. They need opportunities for conversation. They need to hear and become familiar with the sounds, rhythms, and pronunciation of words and phrases. They need to learn basic structures, vocabulary, and various styles of English suitable to environments in which they live. As with other types of learning, language learning requires a supportive climate where a student can try—and try again—with rewards and feelings of success when mastery is achieved.

III. The LEP Student In Your Classroom

Your classroom environment is the setting for learning. How you welcome students into your classroom, how you organize the furniture and materials, the rules you establish for living and learning within this environment, and how you group students for instruction all create the context for your program. Before reading this chapter, please take a few moments to reflect on how you manage your classroom. For some questions you may want to check more than one response.

How I Manage My Classroom

1. A respect for cultural differences is evident in my classroom from
   - ____ pictures showing people of different cultures.
   - ____ lessons focusing on other cultures, including contributions of various groups to the community and the country.
   - ____ acceptance and encouragement of behaviors valued by the family (e.g., cooperative work, manners, respect for elders).
   - ____ cooperation among students of different cultures.

2. The physical environment of my classroom
   - ____ conveys a relaxed atmosphere where students can work in small groups and be comfortable.
   - ____ seems somewhat chaotic until you get accustomed to it; has a structure and organization that is not apparent to the casual observer.
   - ____ is orderly with everything in its place most of the time.
   - ____ conveys the fact that most information is given in lecture format.

3. I make my classroom as visually oriented as possible by
   - ____ using a chalkboard extensively during class.
   - ____ displaying many pictures on the walls.
   - ____ bringing in concrete objects or pictures which usually represent what we are studying.

4. Rules in my classroom are
   - ____ stated and enforced fairly.
   - ____ irregularly enforced.
   - ____ discussed, understood, and then posted.
   - ____ unstated and flexible.

5. The daily schedule
   - ____ varies from day to day.
   - ____ is consistent from one day to the next.
   - ____ is consistent with some variations.

6. I group students
   - ____ according to reading ability.
   - ____ in pairs for special assignments or tutoring.
   - ____ in small groups to work on projects.
   - ____ for special instruction with a teacher or volunteer.

Overview

The way you manage your classroom reflects a particular style or approach to teaching that has been developed over years of experience and study. It would be inappropriate to suggest that you change dramatically or adapt your classroom management techniques to suit a new student population. Many management techniques you have established are applicable to teaching LEP students or can be made applicable if modified slightly.

This chapter will examine ways of orienting LEP students to the classroom, using the classroom environment effectively, establishing and reinforcing rules, and grouping LEP students. In addition, it will discuss two areas of importance when including LEP students in your classroom activities: how to communicate with these students and how to promote cross-cultural understanding in your classroom. All of these elements set the stage for learning.

Orientation

The school environment, as well as your classroom, will be unfamiliar and confusing to all new students, even to those who speak English. Students attending a new school will need to learn about

- the school schedule;
- bus routes and schedules;
- restroom facilities;
- absentee procedures;
- use of the library;
- rules regarding physical education class;
- fire drill routines;
- report card systems;
- guidance office services;
- extracurricular activity opportunities;
- lunch system;
- book acquisition system.

In *your* classroom, new students must become familiar with

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

When welcoming students who do not speak English into your classroom, you will need to be creative. Here are some strategies you might try.

For all students (K - 12th grade):

- Be yourself. A warm and friendly manner will put students at ease.
- Allow for a "settling in period." The differences between students' previous schools and the current one may be extensive. It will take time for students to learn what is expected of them.
- Find out what name the student wants to be called and learn to pronounce it correctly.
- Assign a buddy to each new student, perhaps a rotating buddy to give all students an opportunity to be helpful. A buddy can take the new student around and "show him or her the ropes." A native English-speaking student who is sensitive and gets along well with others can be very effective in this role.
- Draw a map of the school (and perhaps of the immediate community) to help students become oriented.
- Do not expect foreign students to be comfortable initially with open classrooms, group activities, individualization, informal teaching styles, and class participation.

For young students:

- Show your personal warmth and caring; expressing these feelings will go a long way in making students feel comfortable.
- Assign simple classroom duties to help students feel they are a part of the class (e.g., erasing the chalkboard).
- Illustrate the schedule of daily activities in pictures.
- Walk students around the school to show them the location of important places.

For older students:

- Provide orientation handbooks, preferably written in the LEP student's primary language, that contain general school information such as
  - graduation requirements;
  - school calendar;
  - rules and regulations;
  - discipline procedures.
- Have non-native English-speaking students who have been in the school several years and made the adjustment develop "Welcome Handbooks"* in the native language. These handbooks can include personal advice based on real experiences. Students can work in teams and brainstorm responses to topics such as
  - what it felt like coming to a strange school;
  - how to relate to teachers and other students;
  - important school rules;
  - cultural differences that must be considered;
  - tips on how to learn English;
  - credit and elective classes necessary for graduation;
  - sports and clubs.

Classroom Environment

In your classroom, you have arranged the furniture and materials in a way that works for you and that conveys a message about how you expect students to behave and interact. If you prefer to lecture, you have probably placed students so that each one can see you and any materials that you will display. Most likely this means that chairs are arranged in rows facing the front of the room. If you prefer to have students working in small groups or on individual projects, you have probably arranged the furniture in clusters in various parts of the room where groups can work with some sense of privacy. If you feel that students should have access to materials and resources, you have probably organized the materials and resources in a way that invites students to use them.

At the beginning of this chapter, you assessed your classroom. Perhaps when you made this assessment, you did not have any LEP students in your room. It may be helpful to take a second look at your environment, this time from the perspective of the LEP student. The chart on the following pages provides a framework for examining your classroom. It identifies how LEP students typically view the classroom, suggests questions you might ask yourself, and offers concrete ideas for organizing the classroom environment. You may or may not have the flexibility to modify your classroom environment. However, many of the ideas do not require major rearrangements and in most instances, are probably ones you already have adopted.

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*Adapted from *What to Do Before the Books Arrive* by Jean D'Arcy Maculaitis and Mona Scheragor, Alemany Press, San Francisco CA., 1981.

The LEP Students' Perspective	Questions to Consider	Classroom Environment
Most LEP students are accustomed to traditional classrooms where the teacher lectures at the front of the room.	• Will students understand how my classroom is organized? • How can I help LEP students adapt to my classroom arrangement? • How traditional is my classroom arrangement?	
Some LEP students are confused by classrooms that lack structure and organization. They may interpret this to mean that anything goes.	• Is there a logic to the way I've organized materials? • How cluttered is my classroom? • What message does a visitor get?	• Try to eliminate clutter. If necessary, store extra materials in covered containers or behind a curtain. • Organize materials neatly and place them near the area where they will be used.
LEP students are visually oriented and need the reinforcement of concrete materials.	• How often do I use pictures, the chalkboard, or other media? • How much do I depend on verbal communication in teaching? • Do the materials and displays in my room convey what is being taught? • Do I face students when I speak, especially when giving directions, so they can see my expressions and lip movements?	• Use the chalkboard extensively and make sure students can see it. • Consider using a variety of media: overhead projectors, filmstrips, tapes, slides and tape recorders. • Use bulletin boards creatively; make them colorful and uncluttered. Include displays such as: topics, being taught; vocabulary being learned; students' work; labeled pictures of places in your local community; a map of the world showing students' native countries.

The LEP Students' Perspective	Questions to Consider	Classroom Environment
Most young LEP students are uncomfortable in large empty spaces.	• Have I used space effectively? • Is empty space encouraging students to run in the classroom? • What other ways can I arrange the furniture?	• Use furniture to define areas of the room. • Try to eliminate empty space—it's usually wasted space and it encourages behavior better reserved for a gym.
Much of what happens at first will be incomprehensible. LEP students are likely to feel lost, alone, and confused.	• What areas can I set up for LEP students to work on their own or with another student? • How can I arrange activities for a few students while I'm teaching a lesson to the rest of the class?	• Set up an *art center* with magazines and old workbooks where students can make their own picture dictionary and books. • Provide a *game center* with simple games students can play with peers: Lotto, What's Missing, Concentration. • Arrange a *handwriting center* where students can practice the alphabet or new words. • Equip a *listening center* with cassette tapes, records, language masters, and filmstrips. Record simple stories so students can listen to English and look at books. • Set up an *activity center* with subject-related activities students can do on their own: fill in the blanks, check lists, vocabulary lists.

What are changes or adaptations you can make in your classroom? Use the space below to list ideas.

Classroom Management

Classroom management involves the expectations or rules you establish for behavior of students in your classroom. For many teachers, especially those who work with older students, rules may not be verbalized or written down, but they are understood by all. Students quickly learn what you will tolerate in your classroom and what you won't. However, with younger students, you must be more specific about the rules that govern group living.

What are the rules you have established in your classroom?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How do students learn these rules?

_____

_____

_____

_____

LEP students may have trouble learning the rules in your classroom for a number of reasons. Most obvious is the fact that they do not understand the language and therefore cannot understand rules that are written or verbally explained. In their efforts to conform, LEP students often mimic behavior of other students. Sometimes unknowingly, the behavior they choose to emulate is unacceptable to others, and they become confused by the teacher's negative reaction.

Another reason LEP students may have trouble learning the rules is that many rules are unwritten and culturally based. American students intuitively know how far they can go. They begin school with a basic knowledge of what is acceptable in school and what is not, and they can quickly adapt to an individual teacher's style. For example, American students know that it is not acceptable to cut into line, to look at another student's paper during a test, or to be overly familiar with the teacher. LEP students may have to be explicitly taught these common rules of behavior.

In helping LEP students learn the rules in your classroom, consider some of these strategies:

- Look at the rules you have established for your classroom and add any unwritten rules that exist—those you assume students will know instinctively.
- Identify the most important rules you want LEP students to understand.
- Consider how you might illustrate these rules—perhaps with pictures or demonstrations.
- Use peers who know the LEP students' language to convey the rules.
- Select a native English-speaking student who can act as a role model to help LEP students learn the rules.
- Be firm but understanding about helping LEP students conform to your expectations for all students.
- Be patient and allow time for students to become familiar with the rules. Expect some mistakes.
- After LEP students learn the rules, treat them the same as you treat other students in terms of consequences.

Grouping

Grouping of students for instruction is often flexible and variable. How you group students will depend on a number of variables including

- the number of LEP students in your class;
- the number of LEP students in your school;

- the variety of levels of English proficiency;
- the resources available within your school: specialists such as an ESOL teacher, foreign language teacher, reading specialist, curriculum specialist, or volunteers.

For classroom activities, LEP students can be paired with peers. Peers who speak the same language can work on tasks together; English-speaking peers can serve as tutors. Peer tutoring arrangements are beneficial to both LEP students and their American peers. American students have an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge and to help someone else. Older students who assume responsibility for adapting lessons for LEP students can sometimes receive extra credit for their work. For example, peer tutors can

- help LEP students understand the readings by
  - showing them how to find key sentences;
  - simplifying words or phrases to clarify meaning;
  - writing the key sentences in outline form.
- help LEP students with homework assignments and library work by
  - clarifying directions;
  - helping to locate information;
  - correcting mistakes.

You probably group your students in different ways, depending on the activities and subject matter. LEP students can often participate more successfully in math or manipulative lessons than in language lessons. When you make decisions on grouping LEP students, consider the following issues:

- It is important to find ways for LEP students to excel, because so often they feel incompetent. For example, provide social activities or opportunities for LEP students to teach American students about their culture and traditions.
- LEP students already feel lonely and outside the mainstream. When you conduct classroom lessons beyond the LEP students' ability, consider having them work on a task with another student rather than alone. Considering the child's social needs by providing this type of interaction often promotes learning more than isolated activities.

Communication

It's natural for teachers to take for granted that they can communicate with their students. When you work with LEP students, you are serving as a model. Students learn English by copying your speech and that of other students, in much the way a young child learns to speak. It is important to monitor your use of language and the way you communicate with LEP students.

You are a good model of the English language if you

- speak in a natural tone and pace;
- articulate carefully but do not exaggerate pronunciation;
- repeat words, phrases, sentences;
- present concepts in different ways;
- use gestures, facial expressions, and concrete objects to convey your meaning;
- speak in simple sentences, demonstrating if necessary—"Please open the window" instead of "Would you like to open the window for me?";
- seize every opportunity to use language to describe what the student is doing and to engage the student in conversation;
- use correct grammar;
- say what you mean; don't assume the student will get an indirect message—"I like the way the class is so quiet today"—when you mean they are too noisy;
- are careful to explain slang expressions when you use them.

In building the communication skills of LEP students, it may be helpful to keep in mind the following:

- Use every opportunity to involve LEP students in language experiences, even if you have to answer your own questions.
- Work first on basic communication needs.

  Classroom comments, directions, and conversation:

  "May I get a drink of water?"
  "Sit down."
  "How are you?"

  Basic concepts (e.g., Boehm concepts):

  top-bottom
  above-below; over-under; in front of, behind, next to; inside-outside
  near-far; away from-close to
  right-left; side; corner
  around; together-separated; through
  forward-backward
  first, second, third, . . . last; before-after; in order-out of order
  beginning-end; middle, center, between; now
  most-least; more-less; equal, as many
  pair
  part; half, whole, all
  every; many; how many; several; some; few; zero; almost
  wide-narrow; medium sized
  same-different; alike; match; other
  never-always; sometimes

  Personal identification:

  address, phone number, age
  family
  body parts
  community
  safety
  time
  holidays

- Identify the key vocabulary in every lesson.
- Teach new words in context, not in isolation, e.g., not "chair", but "This is a chair," or "Sit in the chair."
- Use the same vocabulary in many contexts, and provide opportunities for students to see and use new words over and over.
- Avoid synonyms and alternative ways of saying things until one way is mastered, e.g., "This is England." Do not introduce the term "Britain," "United Kingdom," or "Great Britain."
- Be sensitive about correcting a student. Try to understand what he/she wants to communicate first.

How you communicate with LEP students sets a tone for the rest of the class. Other students will quickly pick up your approach and imitate it when they talk with LEP students. It might be interesting to monitor your speech by taping yourself or having another teacher observe you and give you feedback.

Cross-Cultural Understanding

LEP students allow you to enrich the curriculum by incorporating activities which promote cross-cultural understanding. In elementary school, where one teacher is responsible for all instruction, it is not too difficult to adapt the curriculum to include activities on understanding other cultures. At the secondary level, how you adapt the curriculum will depend on your area of instruction. Some subject areas lend themselves to adaptation better than others. But because secondary students are older, the variety of possible activities is much greater.

Listed below are some suggestions for activities that can be incorporated into the curriculum to promote cross-cultural understanding. You will need to remember, however, that some students are not informed about their own cultures. Some may have been in the United States for several years and have begun to be assimilated into the dominant culture. In addition, especially at the secondary level where peer pressures are very strong, students may not want to be singled out as "different" or to be seen as foreigners.

- Recognize or celebrate cultural holidays which may differ from mainstream traditions. Show

how mainstream traditions are celebrated in different ways.

- Create opportunities for students to learn a variety of dance steps, perhaps from one another. International clubs are good vehicles for sharing different aspects of culture.
- Plan thematic assemblies and special school "days" which feature a variety of cultural and individual interpretations, expressions, or experiences within the same theme, subject, or form.
- Compare customs, such as gift-giving procedures or table manners; discuss how the concept of what is appropriate differs from culture to culture. (Examples: Eating with the left hand in the lap is considered rude in many Hispanic cultures, whereas it is quite "proper" in Anglo cultures. In many Asian cultures, gifts are presented and received with both hands, and the polite behavior is not to open the gift in the presence of the giver.)
- Ask bilingual students to share "words" which are the same in English as they are in their native languages. Compile a list to post on a classroom bulletin board.
- Actively involve students, parents, and members of the community as culture "consultants" in classroom activities.
- Take field trips to local museums, exhibits, or festivals which demonstrate a variety of cultural experiences, values, or contributions. Design activities that help students to recognize, appreciate, understand, or value differences along with similarities.
- Plan multicultural or international "potluck" socials which feature displays, programs, or other learning activities along with the food.
- Create opportunities for students to research, write about, or illustrate their own or another's cultural or ethnic history or unique experiences.
- Develop a map-reading unit, using local community or area maps. Create opportunities for students to learn about or research the origins of names of streets, subdivisions, schools, libraries, parks, public buildings, stores, or other landmarks. Find out which names reflect the environment. Which are named after events? Which are named after local citizens? Which are named after historical leaders? Discuss how these names reflect the cultural diversity and ethnicity of a local community.
- Teach students the "interview" process. Create opportunities for students to interview family members, other students, or members of the community concerning their ethnic or cultural backgrounds or experiences. (For example, plan an oral history project.)
- Show how modern American English is a combination of many languages and reflects many cultures. (For example, point out how the word origins of foods on a typical fast food restaurant menu reflect wide linguistic and cultural diversity: "Hamburger" - German; "Barbeque" - Haitian; "Frankfurter" - German; "Potato" - South American; "Bun" - Irish; "Mustard" - French; "Sesame" - African; "Catsup" - Malay; "Relish" - French; "Tomato" - Mexican; "Onion" - French; "Lettuce" - French; "Coleslaw" - Dutch; "Spaghetti" - Italian; "Cereal" - Greek; "Chowder" - French; "Candy" - Sanskrit; "Punch" - Indian; "Coffee" - Arabic; "Tea" - Chinese; "Cola" - Africa; "Sugar" - Persian; "Apple" - Teutonic; "Tangerine" - African; "Orange" - Arabic; "Garlic" - Old English; "Coconut" - Spanish; "Vanilla" - Spanish; "Chocolate" - Mexican; "Strawberry" - Anglo-Saxon; "Salt" - Anglo-Saxon; and "Pepper" - East Indian).

For further information, see "Culture and the Classroom Teacher" (**Resource Book**, pages 39-47).

Summary

What happens in your classrooom greatly influences the learning not only of LEP students, but of all students. What you expect, how the room looks, when activities are planned, and how students are organized are some of the questions that you need to answer. Finally, as the teacher, you are a model and what you say and do has a real impact on your students' behavior and performance.

IV. Adapting Instruction and Materials for LEP Students

The curriculum and instructional materials teachers use are often determined by the school system. Some teachers rely quite successfully on suggestions in teacher's guides, while others like to adapt the instructional materials and/or develop their own to suit specific needs of the children they teach.

Before reading this chapter, please take a few moments to reflect on how you plan lessons and use instructional materials in your classroom. In considering the questions below, you may want to check more than one response.

How I Plan Lessons and Use Materials

1. In planning lessons, I
   - ____ plan one lesson for the class as a whole.
   - ____ plan for small groups.
   - ____ plan for the class as a whole and for some children individually.
   - ____ plan some lessons for the whole group and others for small groups.

2. In using textbooks, I
   - ____ follow the instructions in the teacher's guide carefully.
   - ____ follow the instructions in the teacher's guide with some modifications.
   - ____ use the teacher's guide as a starting point but plan my own activities.
   - ____ don't use the teacher's guide at all.

3. In developing goals and objectives for a lesson, I
   - ____ plan the same goals and objectives for all students.
   - ____ identify specific objectives for students who are more advanced or who have special learning problems.
   - ____ present objectives in writing so all students know what I expect them to learn in a particular lesson.

4. After presenting a lesson, I reinforce the information by
   - ____ assigning the activities in the textbook as homework.
   - ____ developing my own reinforcement activities for students to use on their own.
   - ____ repeating parts of the lesson.

5. I feel that basic language skills
   - ____ are the most important skills I can develop in students.
   - ____ have little to do with the subject I teach.
   - ____ can and should be embedded in any subject matter.
   - ____ are the responsibility of the language arts or English teacher.
   - ____ are skills I don't have time to develop in my content-area classes.

6. I feel most comfortable conveying information through
   - ____ lectures.
   - ____ structured activities.
   - ____ discussions.
   - ____ following the student's interest.

Overview

Having come to this point in the book, you know that teaching LEP students is much like teaching the students with whom you are more familiar. You must plan lessons in much the same way you have always done. However, there will be some differences. This chapter on adapting instruction and materials begins by reviewing some ways that lessons might be different if you are teaching LEP students. It provides specific and practical strategies for adapting instructional materials you currently use so that they are appropriate for LEP students.

Strategies for Adapting Instruction

The following are general guidelines for adapting instruction to meet the special needs of LEP students. Their appropriateness for elementary (E) and secondary (S) students has been noted. As you think about these guidelines, remember that regardless of the grade or subject you teach, the emphasis is on language—learning and using language as a foundation for academic development. This emphasis is as important for LEP students as it is for native speakers.

Plan lessons that provide opportunities for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. An effective instructional sequence follows.

- ***Pre-reading***. Before beginning a new lesson, discuss relevant concepts and write the vocabulary necessary for conceptual development on the chalkboard. Refer to students' experiences and background on the topic of the lesson. Practice new vocabulary in phrases and sentences. See, say, and write new words in context, and provide practice reading words in context. (E,S)

  Survey a selection by looking at pictures, reading titles, sub-titles, first paragraph, and last paragraph. Have students make a list of questions after surveying the selection. (E,S)

- ***Reading***. Have students read the selection, keeping in mind the questions derived during the survey. (E,S)

- ***Post-Reading***. These activities develop comprehension and expand on knowledge gained from the selection. Begin with general questions: Who? What? When? Where? or ask "yes" and "no" questions. Then use activities that progress to higher levels of thinking, such as selecting the main idea. (E,S)

- ***Written Exercises***. Use supplementary worksheets, workbooks, and other print materials for review and reinforcement. (E,S)

Involve all the senses in learning.

- Write all objectives and vocabulary on the chalkboard. Write questions and answers on the chalkboard if it is practical. (E,S)

- Use visual materials liberally. Pictures, film, slides and photographs, graphics, illustrations, picture books, and print symbols, are especially useful instructional resources. (E,S)

- Provide a variety of listening activities: listen and speak; listen and write; listen to follow directions; listen for sounds and rhythms; listen to learn new words and phrases. Make use of records, tapes, and conversations daily. (E,S)

- Include learning activities that involve touch and movement: tracing in the air; copying; engaging in dramatic play; classroom games that require small and large muscle coordination. (E)

Teach language in context, and avoid isolation of letters, sounds, and words.

- Teach vocabulary, phrases, and sentences in direct, obvious con texts. If new vocabulary has a direct physical referent, it is easily learned, even more so than words used in phrases and sentences. (E)

- Do not dwell on a phonics approach to reading by isolating sounds from the words. Phonics is helpful only after students have developed a good speaking vocabulary. (E)

- Although teaching the letters of the alphabet in sequence won't help in teaching reading, knowledge of the alphabet is an essential reference tool. (E,S)
- Start students reading structures and vocabulary they encounter orally. Let students practice whole sentences they will use in everyday life. Much later, introduce new words into the reading passages. At this time, point out phonetic contrasts. Limit new vocabulary and introduce it slowly, after the students have learned grammatical structures. (E,S)

Select reading material with careful attention to cultural emphasis, complexity of structures, and vocabulary. Plan to simplify or enhance instructional materials for LEP students.

- Explain cultural phenomena (e.g., a holiday) in advance. Reinforce concepts in a variety of ways. (E,S)
- Be especially careful when selecting reading material for beginning students. The vocabulary and structure should be controlled. As students progress, they can move into less structurally-controlled passages. (E,S)
- Materials can be somewhat above the student's perceived ability to speak the language. Students can learn to comprehend structures long before they feel comfortable using them. (E,S)
- Suggest that students read material on topics covered in their subject area courses. (S)
- Be aware of weak areas in the students' vocabulary: (E,S)

  Names: Pronunciation and spelling of English names are foreign to LEP students. Names are difficult for students to remember, whether they hear them or see them on paper.

  Family and home: Many basal readers and language arts books feature family events that may be quite different for LEP students. Because they speak another language at home, LEP students have much less need for the words that are most familiar to English-speaking students.

  Food: At home, non-English-speaking students will use words from their own language for mealtime conversation. In school, there is not always much opportunity for talking about food.

  Holidays: Holidays are different from ours, and students may not celebrate our holidays for a while. In addition, holiday vocabulary is specialized and used only once a year.

  Content-specific vocabulary: LEP students need to learn and practice content-specific vocabulary before a new lesson is introduced.

Provide for practice and repetition. Commercial materials and materials that are commonly used with mainstream students do not contain enough drill and repetition for LEP students. In addition, often the grammatical constructions are not appropriate for the student's stage of language development. Students need to repeat language and use it in different ways. (E,S)

Build feedback into lessons. Students need to know how they are doing and to be able to check their progress frequently. Self-checking materials are excellent for this purpose. Additionally, testing, in general, is a sound instructional practice. Testing lets teachers know when to provide remediation or acceleration. Testing should be a good learning experience. (E,S)

Devise activities to relax students. While the motivation for learning may be quite high, there is a great deal of anxiety in learning a language.

- Do breathing and stretching exercises during breaks between activities. (E)
- Role play common situations that students experience every day. (E)
- Vary the kinds and length of activities. (E,S)

Create an atmosphere where students are not embarrassed by their errors. The older the students are, the more sensitive they are to criticism.

- Reinforce correct answers. (E,S)
- Be supportive of all responses. (E,S)
- Guard against criticism by peers. (E,S)

Discover what students attach importance to and value. A student's ability to learn is often affected by conflict between the student's culture and the newly-adopted social mores. This is particularly true for secondary students. (E,S)

As you probably recognized, the preceding general strategies are reminders. They will help you target your instruction to the needs of your LEP students.

The following sections describe a process for adapting instruction and materials and suggest ways to incorporate the general strategies in this process. The process has four steps.

Step 1: Identifying goals and objectives.
Step 2: Identifying new concepts and vocabulary.
Step 3: Selecting commercial materials; and/or preparing simplified reading materials.
Step 4: Generating reinforcement activities.

Identifying Goals and Objectives

Your local school district has identified goals and objectives for each subject and grade level for the schools in your area. If you have LEP students in your classes, you need to examine these goals and objectives and identify those that you can work on in the classroom. It is just as critical to identify goals and objectives for LEP students as it is for other students in your class. After all, your LEP student will also be expected to meet school district graduation requirements.

It may be useful at this point to review some basics about goals and objectives. A *goal*, generally the school district's goal, is usually a broad statement of an expected competency, e.g., student will demonstrate mastery of basic reading skills. An *objective* is a much more specific definition of what the student will learn, expressed in behavioral, measurable terms. An objective includes a description of the condition under which the student will be judged, the tasks involved, and the acceptable level of performance. For a unit on Explorers and Discoveries, an objective for the student might be as follows:

> Given the names of three explorers, the student will be able to write a paragraph describing the contributions made by each explorer to the development of the New World. The paragraph should include an introductory statement, at least two supporting ideas, and a concluding sentence.

Writing objectives for LEP students usually means breaking down the objectives intended for the rest of the class into discrete prerequisite objectives. Let's examine a sample school system goal and a local school objective and see how you can adapt them for your LEP students.

School System Goal: *To assure adequate performance in basic reading skills.*

Your local school objective for on-level 9th graders:

Seventy percent of the students enrolled in on-level 9th grade courses will score 70% or better on a test measuring reading comprehension skills.

Considering that your 9th grade LEP students will not be reading at grade level, you might develop the following objective:

Seventy percent of the LEP student enrolled in my class for an entire school year will improve at least two grade levels in reading.

or

Seventy percent of the LEP students enrolled in my class for an entire school year will score 70% or better on a test measuring reading comprehension skills. This test will be designed to test skills at students' reading levels.

In order to achieve the goals of adequate performance in basic reading skills, you will have to work on three main areas: word analysis and identification, vocabulary, and comprehension. Under comprehension, for example, you might have the following objectives:

- Given an illustration of a reading selection, students will answer at least eight of ten questions about the selection.
- Given a reading selection, students will identify the topic of that selection.
- Given a list of ten main events in a reading selection, students will arrange them in correct sequence.
- Given a reading selection, students will identify the main idea of that selection.

For every lesson you plan, you must consider three areas: language development, study skills, and content.

- **Language.** The vocabulary needed to understand a new lesson, concept, or topic must be taught and reinforced throughout the lesson.
- **Study Skills.** Study skills objectives (e.g., learning to use the card catalog while writing a report about famous leaders during the Revolutionary period) can be embedded in content lessons for all students. For LEP students, it is vital to learn study skills, since their previous school work in another country may have been predominantly rote learning.
- **Content.** Like other students, LEP students need to master the content you teach. Eventually, they must be able to do long division, read a newspaper, or write up a chemistry laboratory experiment. Their lack of English and background information usually means the content objectives will be less substantive than those for other students, but they should have some content mastery and should know that mastery is expected.

When the student's English language proficiency is severely limited, the content goal would be to provide initial exposure to the topic. Beyond that, the development of study skills should take precedence. Content should be used to help students develop the study skills they need to succeed in school.

The following is offered as an example of preparing content objectives for a secondary level social studies lesson on Christopher Columbus. Objectives are listed for all students; those starred (*) are for LEP students.

Goal: Students will learn how and why the New World was colonized.

Objectives:

- Identify Christopher Columbus.*
- State what people believed about the earth's shape.*
- Describe Columbus's voyages and discoveries.*
- State opinions as to why people take on seemingly impossible challenges.
- Relate the experiences of a modern explorer—e.g., Sally Ride—and compare to Columbus' experiences.

Identifying New Concepts and Vocabulary

The next step in preparing to teach a lesson for any group of students is to identify the major concepts and important vocabulary words students will need to understand. This requires a review of the reading materials you have selected and an understanding of what concepts and vocabulary have already been reviewed with students.

When you teach LEP students, the list of vocabulary and concepts will no doubt be more comprehensive than for native English-speaking students. It is helpful to write new words on the chalkboard so that all students can refer to them during the lesson.

In the lesson on Christopher Columbus, the following concepts and vocabulary might be selected.

- New concepts:

  discovery

  colonization

  feelings of discouragement, frustration, fear

- New vocabulary:

India	sailors	gold
Europe	supplies	rich
voyage	frightened	discover

Selecting Commercial Materials and/or Preparing Simplified Reading Materials

Materials on a given subject are available for a variety of reading levels. Some students can be reading about Christopher Columbus in a textbook on grade level, while other students are reading the same content in readers prepared for a much lower level of reading ability. The first step in selecting content area materials is to determine the English proficiency level of your LEP students. Generally speaking, LEP students fall into one of *three broad categories*.

1. Students who have either spent a year or more studying at a school in the United States, or who have studied English for three or four years in their own countries: These students are fairly proficient orally, but they cannot read very quickly and they have difficulty writing grammatically correct sentences. They may read at about a 5th or 6th grade reading level in English, although their reading level is probably much higher in their native language.

2. Students who have had some exposure to English: These students can't communicate very well orally, they can only write basic sentences, and they probably read at about a 2nd or 3rd grade level in English. Their reading level in their native language may be much higher.

3. Students who have had no training in English at all: These students may or may not be literate in their native languages.

If your LEP student falls into the first group, *review the materials* used by students in your school who are not reading at grade level. Remember that a LEP student may be at grade level conceptually, but lack the necessary vocabulary and language structures to understand the materials you are using in class. For this reason, you would not want to place this student in a class with low achieving Americans. Rather, allow your LEP student to use materials written at a lower reading level to supplement your text and the other materials that you are using with the class. This will allow the LEP student to follow class discussions and answer questions about the topic being covered.

If your LEP student is in the second group, *examine commercially prepared materials* written for adults, but at a 2nd or 3rd grade reading level. Students in this category will be able to read and answer questions about the same topic the rest of the class is studying, but at a simplified level. It is important to remember that although the LEP student is reading below grade level, he/she can still acquire basic concepts. A peer tutor can reinforce the necessary vocabulary and concepts on an individual basis with LEP students.

If your LEP student is in the third group, you will need to prepare a *simplified reading activity*. You will need a peer tutor or a volunteer in addition to his/her language teacher.

Preparing Simplified Reading Material

Students who have had very little training in English, those in the third group, will require a simplified and very basic introduction to the content area. It may be impossible to find commercial materials appropriate for students at this beginning level. A tutor or volunteer can be very helpful in

preparing materials that teach beginning concepts in the content area before a student is ready to read the simplified materials.

It may be helpful to follow some guidelines in developing simplified reading materials.

A simplified reading

- introduces underlying concepts;
- presents events in a clear sequence;
- provides a clear focus;
- simplifies sentence structure;
- has illustrations for main ideas if possible;
- repeats key vocabulary;
- avoids use of pronouns; and
- avoids content not absolutely necessary for comprehension.

In a lesson on Christopher Columbus, for example, you may locate or make uncluttered maps, and write a simple reading explaining the four directions and showing that the earth is round before a student would understand the concepts developed in a reading on Columbus.

Generating Reinforcement Activities

A key strategy in adapting your teaching to accommodate LEP students is the amount of repetition and reinforcement you build into every lesson. You will want to use every opportunity to increase students' exposure to language and to repeat and practice syntax and structures. Therefore, you need to provide many different ways to give students a chance to work with words—listening, speaking, reading, writing.

Reinforcement activities should

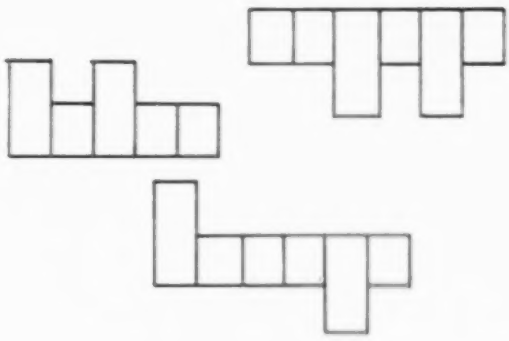
- focus on the objectives of the lesson;
- use the same language as the reading selections; and
- allow for different levels of comprehension.

Most commercial materials come with one or two workbook pages or supplementary worksheets that students can complete independently or with a peer or volunteer help. If these worksheets are not sufficient to reinforce the lessons for LEP students, it may be necessary to develop additional activities and worksheets.

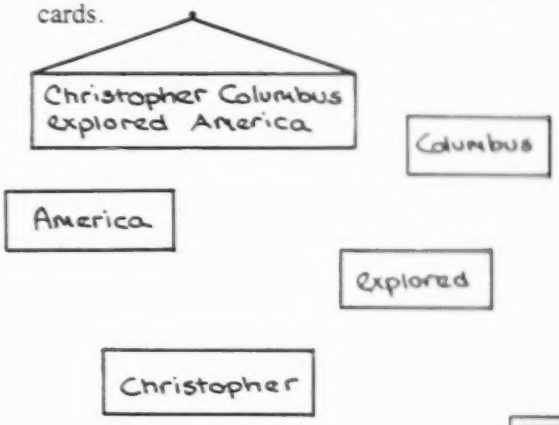
Some examples of reinforcement activities include the following:

- Fill in the blanks (Cloze). Copy the simplified story omitting every ninth word. Have students fill in the blanks.
- Find the "people" words in the story: men, sailors, Columbus, American. Have students copy a sentence that contains each word.
- Main idea. Direct students to copy the sentence telling the main idea of each paragraph.
- Use configuration clues. Have students write the appropriate word in each configuration.

Europe voyage India



- Sentence packets. Build sentences from word cards.



- Make individual dictionaries. Have primary and elementary students compile picture dictionaries. Secondary students' dictionaries can vary in sophistication, depending on the skill levels of the students.
- Complete crossword puzzles. Use teacher-made crosswords to stress particular vocabulary. Assign English-speaking students to work independently or in groups to create original crossword puzzles to use as a peer tutoring activity.

Selecting Methods for Teaching Reading Skills

The suggestions in the previous section identify techniques that can be adapted to any age group or subject matter area, in order to provide individualized instruction for LEP students in elementary and content area classrooms. This section deals specifically with reading. Historically, elementary teachers have taught reading and language skills as part of the daily curriculum. English teachers in secondary schools have refined and extended language skills. But secondary teachers of math, history, chemistry, or other content areas have not felt responsible for providing instruction in reading and the language arts. Today, standardized test scores and comments from college instructors and employers testify to the need for continual and improved language instruction. As a result, all teachers, especially those who have LEP students in their classrooms, must teach language concurrently with content.

Methods for teaching reading and other language skills abound. Some are appropriate for the elementary level, some can be used at the secondary level, and some are appropriate for use with illiterate students. As you review each method described below, consider how you might use it with your LEP students and your native English-speakers as well.

The Language Experience Approach to Reading (L.E.A.)

This approach to reading was devised to tap the wealth of oral language the average native-language six-year-old brings to his/her initial school experience. It is especially useful with illiterate LEP students who have developed some sight vocabulary and with students in early reading stages. Its components are

- the stimulus;
- the model;
- copying and illustrating the story;
- collecting the stories in a "book" which becomes the student's "first reader;"
- the word-bank;
- original stories.

The *stimulus* is used for motivation, and may be an interesting picture, a toy of some sort, a souvenir from a vacation trip (e.g., cowboy hat, coral, shell, rock, etc.), or an important event—anything which might prove stimulating for your particular students.

Develop the *model story* from the stimulus. The teacher helps students create sentences about the picture, object, or event (1-3 sentences but no more, at first) on large chart paper that has been taped to the board. For example, if the stimulus was a toy truck, the written story might be as follows:

The Toy Truck

The toy truck is red.
It has four wheels.

Note the vocabulary is controlled and the sentence structures are varied. The teacher reads the whole story aloud once or twice, gliding a finger or pointer in a left-to-right progression under each word during the reading. The next step is to have the student "echo" the story, first one line at a time, then two or three lines together.

The next step is *copying and illustrating* the story. The student copies the story on regular-sized paper. The teacher monitors this activity closely to make certain that letters are formed correctly and that students use a left-to-right progression. Once the story is copied, the student illustrates it. The illustration aids the student in identifying and recalling the story content.

When enough stories have been collected, they make a "book." The "book" becomes the student's first reader. It does not go home until the

student can read all of the stories in the book fluently.

Each story can be used to teach the language arts skills applicable to the individual student's needs; for example, capitalization of title, capitalization of the first word in a sentence, word order, sentence structure, punctuation, and paragraph indentation.

The *word-bank* is an integral part of L.E.A. and is a way to build a large sight vocabulary. The student develops a word-bank by copying the words from an experience story onto individual word slips (lined composition paper cut into a uniform size), and storing them in a large envelope, labeled with the student's name.

During the first weeks of instruction, the student should "clear" his/her word-bank daily; he/she should identify each word in isolation. If the student cannot remember a word, he/she is asked to refer to the word in context. When a word has been learned, it may be removed from the word-bank. The word-bank vocabulary can be used to teach alphabetizing, matching words with similar phonic elements, building new sentences, parts of speech, etc.

Students can begin to *create their own stories*. One way to do this is to have the student tell a story on tape, and then transcribe the story with the student. Peer tutors or older students can help. Original stories can be collected into a book of readings.

Assisted Reading (Neurological Impress)

Assisted reading is a one-to-one activity where the teacher or a good student reader reads with normal speed and intonation to the LEP student. This is an especially good activity for developing auditory awareness of the rhythm, pitch, and phrasing of English. It can also be used to develop left-to-right progression.

Initially, the teacher guides the student's finger under the line of print while the story is read orally. Eventually, the teacher and student read in unison while continuing the finger movement under the printed word.

It is important to choose reading materials appropriate to the student's age level and vocabulary. For example, if the student has limited vocabulary, reading material with good illustrations and less print would be more suitable than a page full of text.

For elementary school children, reading sessions should be relatively short in duration, no more than 15 minutes, and the teacher should be alert to signs of disinterest.

D.R.T.A. — the Directed-Reading-Thinking Activity

This method for teaching at the elementary level should be started once the LEP student is placed in an appropriate basal text. This technique has three main steps: predict, read, and prove.

The teacher asks the students to open their readers to a specific story, read the title (get the main idea), and look at the picture clues offered on the title page. The teacher asks the students to use these clues to predict what the story will be about. Next, the students read a given portion of the story silently and are asked if they want to change their prediction. They have to substantiate their responses by reading orally the portion of the story that applies. The teacher's role in the D.R.T.A. is to guide the students through the reading experience, asking pertinent questions. The student's role is to substantiate answers by locating information in the text and reading it orally. If the student does not know a word, he/she is asked to read to the end of the sentence to try and determine the meaning from the context. The D.R.T.A. teaches students to read for meaning, provides a purpose for oral reading, and encourages considerable group interaction.

Once the student feels comfortable with the D.R.T.A., the teacher may individualize the activity by allowing the student to select library material on his/her reading level to augment the basal text.

Modeling

Modeling, a simple and reliable method for teaching language, is familiar to most LEP students who come from schools where learning is primarily teacher-directed and not student-centered. To use the modeling technique, the teacher

does or says what he/she wants the student to do and say. After listening and watching, the student imitates the teacher's words and actions. This method requires the teacher to move around and use a lot of expression so that the students can learn visually and kinesthetically, as well as aurally. To provide a reading experience, the teacher might show the words on cards while explaining what the students should do. Later the teacher shows the cards without saying the words and asks students to do what the cards say. Any area of content is appropriate for this type of drill.

The Whole Word Approach

This approach to teaching reading is especially effective with illiterate students. This approach begins with aural/oral activities as follows:

- Introduce a full paragraph or story. Read it aloud and discuss its meaning.
- Introduce no more than five new words in the lesson; then focus on one word at a time.
- Be sure that every vocabulary item is presented with a visual aid, such as an object or pictures.
- Introduce vocabulary items in context or in cohesive relationships. For example: "pencil, eraser, paper;" "hat, gloves, coat;" "spoon, fork, knife."
- Include many physical and manipulative activities with realia and pictures to reinforce each word. For example, provide a word, then have students pick out a corresponding picture and hold it up or tack it onto the board.
- Present a picture or situation that places vocabulary words in a larger context. For example, to teach the word *nose*, show a picture of the whole body.
- Review all previous items before introducing new material.
- Check for aural comprehension. For example, hold up a picture or object and name the item either correctly or incorrectly; have students respond by holding up one finger for "yes," two fingers for "no."
- Check for a student's ability to produce a word orally when given visual stimuli.
- Give students experiences with classification/categorization activities. For example, have students eliminate a picture or object that does not belong in a group; when given two or more domains, have students appropriately classify up to five items.

Oral introductory activities should be completed before introducing the written form of the word. Include some of these reading and writing activities:

- Present the written form of the word simultaneously with the picture or object. (Be sure to select words with obviously different written configurations.)
- Display labeled pictures or objects.
- Direct students to match the label by superimposing the word configuration on the label.

- Have students form the written word with 3-dimensional alphabet letters and a model (individual flashcards).

- Include some of the following activities:

  Trace words in sand or salt.

  Form letters with pipe cleaners or clay.

  Trace with finger on the desk.

  Trace with wrong end of pencil.

  Cut out sandpaper letters and mount on cardboard; then make rubbings from sandpaper words.

  Cut up word cards to make word puzzles.

- Direct students to first trace and then copy on lined paper each word at least five times.
- Give individual students different word cards. Then provide simple oral directions. For example: "Stand up/raise your hand/sit on the floor, if you have the word *shoe*."
- Display a chart with selected vocabulary words. Give students oral directions to circle/check/underline/cross out/put a box around a given word.
- Check for word recognition by having students select the correct word card to label a picture.
- Check for visual memory by flashing a word card for three seconds. Then ask students to write the word from memory.
- Have students write words when they are presented orally.
- Have students write the word when given a visual stimulus.
- Have students write simple sentences when given a visual stimulus. For example: "The dog is big." "The jacket is blue."

Controlled Reading

Controlled reading provides repetitive practice with written materials. The paragraph and steps that follow illustrate this technique.

Christopher Columbus was born in Italy in 1446. He wanted to be a sailor. He learned to make maps. It was a long voyage. Columbus sailed to the New World. He reached an island near the coast of America in 1492.

Follow these steps to use the controlled reading technique:

- Present vocabulary (underlined words).
- Read entire paragraph.
- Read paragraph sentence by sentence and ask comprehension questions.
- Have class read sentence by sentence after the teacher.
- Have individuals read sentences.
- Have class read whole paragraph.
- Select one or more of these closure activities:

  Have students write the paragraph from memory.

  Have individuals write sentences on the board.

  Give the paragraph as a dictation exercise.

For more information about methods of teaching reading to preliterate, literate, and illiterate students, consult the article, "Reading Instruction for Language Minority Students" in *Schooling and Language Minority Students: A Theoretical Framework*. (See **Resource Book** page 85.) Also see Eleanor W. Thonis' *Teaching Reading to Non-English Speakers* (**Resource Book** page 85).

Summary

Teachers of LEP students must adapt their instruction and materials to meet the needs of LEP students. In so doing, they are encouraged to give special emphasis to language learning by providing numerous opportunities for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Instruction should engage all of the LEP student's senses while providing for ample practice and repetition. Language should be taught in the context of meaningful units of speech (as opposed to teaching sounds in isolation) in a relaxed atmosphere where trial and error will not result in embarrassing the student. At all times the teacher should be sensitive to cultural or value differences among LEP students that affect their responses to materials or instructional practices. Finally, lessons should always include feedback so that students can monitor progress and improve their skills.

Lessons developed for LEP students should include clear statements of goals and objectives, but allow for simplifying expected outcomes so that goals and objectives are realistic and attainable. Teachers must take care to locate words and concepts that might be difficult for or new to LEP

students and provide special instruction in these words and concepts. Where commercial materials are used, lower grade level or adult basic education materials may be the best choice. Additionally, the teacher may need to prepare simplified reading materials and workbook activities as a means of providing extensive reinforcement with every lesson.

In teaching language, all teachers teach reading to some extent. Several reading methods are available and, like general instructional methods for LEP students, the reading methods of choice provide thorough and direct instruction, ample practice, repetition, contextual teaching, immediate feedback, and involvement of all senses.

For further information on adapting instruction and materials for LEP students, refer to the following sections in the **Resource Book**:

- Teaching Strategies for Working With LEP Students, (pages 77-86);
- Developing Goals and Objectives for LEP Students, (pages 63-64); and
- Establishing Your Resource Center, (pages 87-89).

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